

THE
DIVINE WISDOM
OF THE
DRĀVIDA SAINTS

BY

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*The English Translator of Rāmānuja's Holy Commentaries
on the Bhagavad-Gītā ; the Author of The Holy Lives
of the Āzhvârs, or the Drāvida Saints ;
Lectures on Inspiration &c. &c. &c.*



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8	9	Reserved	Reverend
22	5	intensely.	Intensely
27	12	ekided	chid
36	7	out of the way	out-of-the-way
37	27	Admidet	Amidst
72	25	religious	religions
80	4	offr	for
81	25	grea	great
91	5	Ârhrâ	Ârhrâr
105	20	Love	Bliss
108	35	contentment	Opotentment
111	11	on	no
129-130	14-1	immediately	immediately
129	12	My own	Our
130	11	fear	fear for
130	25	cupmany	company
131	3	criticalstate.	critical state
131	13	fear him yet, as	fear for him yet as, for
132	8	out of the way	out-of-the-way
132	21	ससि	सन्ति
135	32	कुठारं	कुठारं
136	24	to one	to the one
139	3	chosce	chance
140	19	with him	to him
140	16	it in all	it with all
142	6	Vishnu's refuge	refuge with Vishnu
142	25	Engl: Fr.	Engl: Tr
142	31	Teachers'	Teacher's
143	22	and unto	unto
145	3	cast	cast away
148	24	the same on one	alike on the one
148	7	head cut	head had been cut
149	14	wherever	whenever
156	11	at time	during times

PAGE.	LINE.	FOR.	READ.
158	12	in Gita	in the Gita
162	2	were of	were of a
163	7	South Sea	Sea at Cape Comorin
163	10	to pray	to pray to
164	6	caused	caused its
164	10	are	are
165	15	former-faith-demands	former—faith—demands
166	23	ceremoney	ceremony
170	17	his worth	worth his
178	9	inquire	inquire into
178	12	"favoured" man	man "favoured"
184	11&17	Âyibân	Âyitân
187	7	to Him	of Him
188	12	with Bhattar	Bhattar
188	12-13	mediating	negotiating
188	13-14	weaver in chief	weaver-in-chief
189	17	Bustiest	busiest
190	29	His, attributes	His attributes
192	22	निवाय	निवारय
193	23	ययूखान्	मयूखान्
193	33	यद्विरहो	यद्विरहो
193	11	night	night
193	14	evening	evening
209	27	account	account
214	29	विहगे	विहगे
214	30	दिनी	दिनी
215	1	त्वडा	त्वडा
215	2	श्रीकृष्	श्रीरि
215	3	भूमःकथं	भूमःकथं
215	4	त्वाविम	त्वाविम

INTRODUCTION.

"*LOVE* ¹ makes the Saint, *Wisdom* ², the sage," are the sage words of Śrī Pārthasārathi Yogi in his "Select Evidence" (1892 A.C.). This book, which I name, "the Divine Wisdom of the Drāviḍ Saints," is really a series of Discourses on the Highest Mystery, viz., Wisdom matured into Love of God. This, in other words, is no other than the fullest blooming of the lotus-heart of man thirsting for spiritual communion with God. This again, in other words, means the infinite expansion or development of the consciousness of man so as to fully realise what it is for man to infinitely love his God and what it is for God to infinitely love His own creature, or Divine love, filial and parental. This book treats of both these kinds of love. Whereas man's love to God is the culmination of his spiritual aspiration, God's love to man is the fulfilment of His purpose of creation ³. By Love, God (Brahman) creates and completes. By Love, man begins and attains to God.

1 This constitutes our *Mystical Theology* or *Bhagavad - Gīṇyām*. Says Fr. de Sales "The end of speculative theology is to teach us to know God, and the object of mystical theology is to teach us to love Him. One produces learned men, doctors, theologians; whilst the other forms saints, or ardent lovers of the Almighty, devoted to His Service, and burning with zeal for His interests."

2 This constitutes our *Scholastic* or *Speculative Theology* or *Bhāṣyānam*. [Vide Note 1.]

3 This Love emanating in creation is because of the Blameful

(*ananda*) Nature of God. This creation is called therefore the *līlā* or sport of the Deity. A Magic paper says "That Truth (the God of wisdom) created the world by bursting into 'Seven peals of laughter' thus typifying the Bliss of the Deity in emanation or creation, caused by that divine Love and compassion for all that lives and breathes, which is the well-spring of the Septemic Cause of the Universe." The Upanishad - Epithet of Brahman for the God-head means He who is Great, and makes all His creatures, like Himself, great. [Vide also p. xxvii of our Holy Lives of Drāviḍa Saints.]

2. Love is *Bhakti* in Sanskrit. To *know* God, to *love* God, and to *serve* God are the three stages which mark the journey of the God-aspiring soul. " 'To *know* God,' marks his entry in the Path, 'to *love* God' marks his successful travel on the Path, and 'to *serve* God' marks the Goal or the End of the Path. When we gave out the translation of Rāmānujā's Commentaries on Bhagavad-Gītā, we showed how, according to Rāmānuja, the Vedāntas are not treatises which simply give us a mere *knowledge* of God, but they are treatises, revealing the Doctrine of *Love* to God. Rāmānuja, the Prince of sages and saints (A. C. 1017), wrote in his Preface to this work (P. 10) thus :—

" Taking advantage of the opportunity presented by His having to persuade Arjuna to fight, Śrī Krishna promulgated the doctrine of Bhakti-Yoga—led up to by Jñāna and Karma—, or that Path of Loving-Devotion which is the burden of all the Vedānta-teaching, and by which He is indicated as the Only Object of Love; and that, *loved*, He Himself is the Means to lead man to the climax of his ambition viz., *Moksha* (or salvation from all imperfect states or modes of existence)."

But of the combination of the triple aspect viz., (1) *knowledge*, (2) *love* (3) and *service* to God, Gītā dwells largely on the first factor, sketches out the outlines of the second factor, and alludes to the third factor. The present book, though not a regular treatise on the second factor, may yet be taken to be an interesting Prelude to the *Bhagavad-Vishayam*, from which in the shape of topics it is drawn and arranged. The book indeed makes frequent mention of the third factor, viz. *service* to God, for example, *vide*, Topics No. 156 p. 176 and No. 165 p. 188

3. In the Bhagavad gītā, above referred to, allusion was made to this Renowned work, viz., the *Bhagavad-Vishayam* in the following terms :—

" The Vaishnavas, all the world over, especially the Vaishnavas of Bengal and North India, will heartily welcome the frequent references I

have made, in the Foot-Notes, to *Śrī Bhāgavata*,—a remarkable work on *Bhakti*—a work which is revered by the Hindus as almost apocalyptic. Also the reader is here and there introduced to that other greater work on the still higher stages of Love, the Hermeneutic Literature known as the *Bhagavat-Vishayam* or voluminous commentaries on the Love-outpourings of the Inspired Saint Parāśkṛpa (alias, Nammālvār 1 [P. xv Pref.]”

To give the world a few gems out of this Treasury of Divine Love, in an English dress, is the object of the present work. To give the whole of it at once is a herculean task. That this is possible depends on strong health, a mighty intellect, and a heart which has truly liquified to God,—added to this, inspiration by God’s grace. Otherwise it is simply profane to attempt the work. Yet, to show to the world what wealth of thought and sentiment lie buried in the vast store-house of Drāvidian Intellect and Heart, a collection of a few truths culled out of the ten voluminous Quarto Tomes, covering nearly 5000 pages called the *Bhagavad-Vishayam*, aforesaid [published in Telugu Characters during years 1871-1876 (A.C)], is now presented to the world as a specimen. Even this weak effort on our part is due to the highly inspiring en-

1. He is the chief of the Saints. These saints or *Aśvats* as they are called, are the Drāvida Saints prophetically referred to in the *Śrī Bhāgavata* [Bk. XI. ch-5. Verses 34-40]. The following extract taken from our Lectures on Inspiration &c., Part II. pp. 67-68, will help to give some idea of the character of this Love-Saint. “Briefly St. Nammālvār says that when one is overcome by *Bhakti*-exultation, trembling in every cell of his being, he must freely and passively allow this influence to penetrate his being, and carry him beyond all known

states of consciousness. Never from fear or shame, that bystanders may take him for a madman, ought the exhibition of this *bhakti-rapture* that deluges his being, to be suppressed. The very madness is the distinguishing character of the enraptured Saint, distinguishing him from the ordinary mortals to whom such beatific experience is necessarily denied. The very madness is the *Bhaktas’* pride. ‘In that very madness’, the Saint exhorts, ‘run, jump, cry, laugh and sing, and let every man witness it’ [Vide his Life in our “Saint’s Lyrics.”]

couragement dowered on us from time to time by means of many loving letters by our Guru Śrī Pârthasârathi Yogi

4. The plan followed is a division of the Book into a number of short topics,¹ each complete and independent in itself, and illustrated by conversations and anecdotes, thus for the first time giving to the Western world an idea of this Eastern method of inculcating spiritual instruction. Another novel feature of this book consists in its having copious footnotes, which are mostly correspondences selected from out of a wide range of works of Western Divines so as to show how religious ideas are found to have unity and universality, how it may be seen that One raceless and countryless God indeed rules over all races and all countries, and how the Highest Mystery of religion consists in the fervid over-mastering intensity of rapt love to God—which is the highest wisdom, the highest mysticism and occultism leading to liberation and beatitude,—or communion with God.

The plan also is one in which each topic may be read by itself, without reference to its neighbours. And then too it has the beauty of brevity, as being illustrative of one subject at a time and so suited as to be fit for different frames of mind. They may thus be supposed to be sufficiently inviting even to a casual reader, without wearying. For easy reference, a synopsis of contents has also been prepared and added.

1 Peter of Vilar, Archbishop of Vienna suggested such a plan when St. Francis De Sales wrote his "Treatise on the Love of God." The latter says "Among other hints which he was kind enough to suggest, he particularly recommended that the chapters into which my subject was divided should not be longer than was indispensably

necessary. The reason alleged for this advice was that travellers are seldom disposed to purchase the pleasure of viewing curious objects at the expense of a considerable interruption to their journey though they willingly turn a few steps from their direct route to see any thing particularly worthy of notice" [P: XXI. Introduction].

5. Should this book be found acceptable and useful to the public in the way it is presented, we should be flattered to set ourselves gladly to work again to produce one or two more volumes of the kind, for which there is ample material.

6. After the publication of the English Translation of Rāmānuja's Gītā-Commentaries, we had a mind to put our hand to the Vedānta-Sūtras, but to our agreeable surprise we found that Prof. Rāṅgāchārya had already begun his translation of Śrī Bhāṣya, of which we already possess Volume I, a work to which no other than Prof. M. Rāṅgāchārya, of his erudition in Sanskrit and English, could have done full justice. The Sanskrit Treasures of the Drāviḍian sages have thus one after another seen light; but if one should turn his attention to the Drāviḍian Treasures of Divine Love, he would be astounded at the large scope there is for taking up that field. Max Muller in his latest work "The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy" (Pp: xx-xxi, Preface), expresses himself to the following effect.—

"In some cases the enthusiasm of native students may seem to have carried them too far, and a mixing up of philosophical with religious and theosophic propaganda, inevitable as it is said to be in India, is always dangerous, * * * What we want are texts and translations, and any information that can throw light on the chronology of Indian philosophy. Nor should their labour be restricted to Sanskrit Texts. In the South of India there exists a philosophical literature which though it may show clear traces of Sanskrit influence, contains also original indigenous elements of great beauty and of great importance for historical purposes. Unfortunately few scholars only have taken up as yet, the study of the Drāviḍian languages and literature, but young students who complain that there is nothing left to do in Sanskrit literature, would I believe, find their labours amply rewarded in that field."

Unfortunately Max Muller has departed from this world before he would have had the satisfaction of seeing his desire at least partly fulfilled. That, with the present book of this kind in hand, we should have been deprived of the satisfaction of pre-

sending him with it—for he is no more with us—is a matter of much personal regret to us as we know the warm welcome he accorded to the English Translation of Rāmānuja's Commentaries on the Bhagavad Gītā, in his letter dated 11th May 1899 (Oxford). We however presume that labours in the Drāvidian Field, such as

- (1). *Sri-vachana-bhāṣana* or The "Good Word-Jewel",
by Śrī Pārthasārathi Yogī;
- (2). *Tattva-traya* or The Three Categories, by the same;
- (3). The *Nityānandasādhana Series* by M. B. Śrīnivāsa
Aiyangār, M.A. Mysore.
- (4). *Śivajñāna-Bodha* by J.M. Nallasāmi Pillai, B.A.B.I. ;¹
- (5). *Light of Grace* by Do.

had come to his notice, as well as the labours of the great Tamil Scholar, Dr G. U. Pope, whose latest work is the *Tiruvāchakam* of Mīnikka-vāchakar. What causes us regret is that the beautiful Vaishṇava Field of Drāvidian Lore has not as yet found a Western Champion like this great Doctor. Until one arises, the public must be satisfied with lesser attempts in this direction by native scholars, these possessing, however, the advantages of understanding rightly the spirit of what they write.

7 Other motives also which actuated us in bringing out a work of the present kind need some mention. One is that

1 The following extracts from this work are useful:—

"It is not every body, who has the desire to study Philosophy or can become a Philosopher. To these I would recommend the devotional works of our Saints, Śaiva or Vaishṇava. Unlike the Hindus of other parts of this vast Peninsula (India) it is the peculiar pride of the Tamilian (= Dravidian) that he possesses a Tamil (Dravid) Veda, which con-

sists of Tiruvāimozhi, Devāram &c. This is not an empty boast."

"The Tamil (Dravid) Veda is the outpouring of their (Saints') love."

"I cannot do better than recommend these very books as a first course, and the conviction will surely dawn upon his mind... that he has nothing better for his last course than what he had for his first course." [Introduction. Pp. xviii-xix].

of bringing to light a lot of 'Old Spiritual Sayings,' lying hidden in unread and little understood books and which are therefore being forgotten by the present generation. And we are on the other hand deluged by so many "New Sayings" by the moderns, hardly leaving one, time to look back into the archaic records of the "Old Sayings." Whether the New Sayings are really new, or only Old Sayings put into new bottles, the reader may judge for himself after perusal and comparison. Considering the flood of New Sayings that is deluging the land, it is time that the more valuable Old Sayings be re-habitated; for these will otherwise vanish into the limbo of the forgotten past. Max Muller foresaw this like a prophet when he spoke.—

"It is feared however that even this small remnant of philosophic learning will vanish in one or two generations, as the youths of the present day, even if belonging to orthodox Brâhmanic families, do not take to these studies as there is no encouragement" [P xx Preface to the Six Systems of Indian Philosophy].

Another motive actuating us is our wish to stem the tide of materialism and vice¹ which by Western thought and Western habits (respectively) have unfortunately contributed to upset the minds of the Indian youth, and the spiritual barrenness which it is producing by the pure secular modes of education pursued in this Country.² Says H. J. S. Cotton in his *New India* (1886):—

1. As to these, we can only refer the reader to the array of evidence collected by Pârthasârathi Yogi in his Suppl. IX on Hinduism, or Correspondence relating to a recent conversion Pp. 26-41 (1894).

2. (a) Rev H. Rice, the London Mission Missionary testifies to this state of India in his "Helps to Truth Seekers" (1860) page 1. Preface:—"That such persons (i.e.

those who have been brought into contact with modern infidelity in its most popular phases) do exist, will not be questioned by those who have any acquaintance with educated Hindu Society especially in large towns and cities, where the stream of atheistic and corrupting literature rushes with unabated force through the Govt. Offices and Colleges, bearing before it much of

"Still it is undoubtedly the case that, like the Roman Prefects of old, our Indian administrators have in general been careless about spiritual matters. The Government has, broadly speaking, exercised no influence whatever to induce the natives to become Christians, and the natives have responded to this indifference by showing no desire whatever to become converts to the State religion. When Hinduism ceases to be a living power in the minds of the young men who frequent our English schools and colleges, Christianity, rarely if ever, takes its place. The very fact of its profession by the foreign rulers of the country has been represented to me by native gentlemen as a valid reason for their aversion to it."

* * * *

Our State Colleges are content with chaos, their results are subversive only, the old belief is thrown off, the consequent disturbance issues in no real substitute, and the mental and moral state suffers from the negation." [P. 154]

* * * *

"During my eighteen year's experience of Bengal I do not remember a single instance of the conversion of a respectable native gentleman to Christianity" [P. 159]

the heart and genius of the rising generation of this country"

(b) Martin Luther complained similarly of Europe "Yea verily there have been men, but God's wrath, provoked by our sins, hath not judged us worthy to see and hear them, for it is well known that for a long time past such things have not been treated of in our universities, nay it has gone so far that the Holy Lord of God is not only laid on the shelf, but is almost smothered away with dust and moths" [Theologia Germanica p. XV Intro.]

(c) Only the other day His Lordship the Bishop Whitehead of Madras said in His Address, (Bangalore, 31st July 1901) — That the general result of University Education in India has been to produce a

very widespread unsettlement in matters of religious belief and a vast amount of religious indifference."

I Our Hindu Youth may in this connection bear in their mind what was said of George Eliot, the Queen of Novelists "While to undeveloped minds amongst us, inoculated with the teachings of free thought, the past of the human race appears as one dreary scene of folly or superstition, the powerful intellect of George Eliot is so impressed with the worth and importance of bygone ages that in her estimation religion and moral sympathy with the historical life of man is the larger half of culture" [Vide P. 28 of Suppl. ix to Hinduism by S. Pārthasarathi Yogi].

8. Theosophy has, however, for the last twenty years and more, exercised a very marked influence on the Hindu mind (not to mention the world-revolution it is causing); but whether it will leave a permanent mark in its aspect of professing to give something new, to the exclusion of old traditions of the Land, is a matter of doubt. We do not go so far in our misgivings of this movement as H. J. S. Cotton goes, when he says in the same work noted above that :—

“ The subtleness of its teaching, and the degree of scope which the supernatural interference of spiritual, or so-called astral, phenomena afford to the imagination, are features peculiarly congenial to the Hindu intellect. A belief in the doctrines of Theosophy is consistent with the tenets of Brahmoism and even with the professions of orthodox Hinduism. The native mind has also been able to see that in some occult manner, but with a definiteness and force quite unmistakable, the European adherents of the system have been elevated by a kind of moral regeneration from indifference and sometimes from positive dislike, into sincere and hearty sympathy with the people of the country. The conditions have, therefore, been very favourable to the spread of Theosophy among natives. ‘Tossed to and fro by every blast of vain doctrine, they have rallied round the new-fangled ideas of this weird and obscure system with an eagerness which shows the need among them of a more rational and satisfying belief.’ [Pp. 163-164 *ibid.*]

But Mr. Cotton wrote anterior to the days of Mr. Annie Besant, whose advent into the field, we are able to say, has had the effect of curbing the rage for phenomena—be they ‘alleged on credible testimony’ or ‘propped up by fraud’—and re-establishing the Hindu mind on the safer basis of its own Old Traditions, a practical demonstration of which has recently been afforded by the establishment of the Central Hindu College, Benares, though the Anglo-Indian sentiment towards it may still be one of suspicion. Revival and rehabilitation of Old Traditions

have thus a greater value¹; and to such a loving task therefore we have addressed ourselves, albeit a small beginning.

9. This work contains precious pearls of truth, despite the present fast-going westernized generation's tendency to depreciate their worth, because of want of serious study, examination and reflection. This tendency to tear oneself from the past is dangerous inasmuch as one looses his moorings and drifts in a sea of bewildering doctrines of all kinds. Old Traditions, besides, have such a spiritual force associated with them that they readily commend themselves to our minds more than either hidden libraries in underground caverns, to which we have no access, or the so called *Ākāśic* records which are far removed from the ordinary senses possessed by mankind, or those modern spiritualistic *séances* which resort to darkness for their manifestations.

(1) The value to us Hindus of our own Traditions may be easily estimated by the value they possess even in the eyes of such foreign men as Schopenhauer. Max Müller said 'Whatever other people may say about the misguided men who sacrificed everything to the Veda, I still count the Veda among my best friends and I sometimes regret that my duties as Professor of Comparative Philology in the University of Oxford should, during my later years, have withdrawn my full allegiance to it' [Vol I. *Indian Review*, p. 53d]. This ought to produce a shame in us who have, in our zeal for foreign things, forgotten our allegiance to our own, have denationalized ourselves, and have lost all respect in the eyes of the foreigners, which we would, by remaining faithful to our own, have preserved in our own as

well as in their eyes. In a letter to us, D. 26-b-95, our Gurm Pārbandraṭhī Yogi writes,—"You study other Vedas without first doing justice to the particular Veda to the study of which you have received a particular calling, just as you have been appointed to be born at a particular time and place, as a son of particular parents, a subject of a particular Government and speaking a particular mother-tongue, with particular aptitudes and opportunities, under the laws of organism, heredity and environment. You work, commit in the eyes of the law the offence of a *Sikhā-ranta* (Adulterer)." Cp. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." [John X. 1].

10. Besides old, these Traditions possess further the charm of treatment by a wealth of happy illustrations. Thus the otherwise bitter capsules of spiritual truth are administered, covered over with the sugar of anecdotes and acts and conversations of the saints and sages who figure therein.

11. The Traditions then, as now presented, claim high descent from saints and sages who have lived from time to time and whose chief exponent was the great Rāmānuja, who is described as the central Gem (*Nayaka-mang*) in the Garland of that Hierarchy.¹ Even in his days, the old Traditions were found to be lapsing into obscurity, but he came to rescue them for posterity. We owe to him all that we possess. The impulse given by this Mahātma to the revival of religion and letters was such that not only did the old Traditions see light, but these were commented and popularised by his co-workers and spiritual descendants for a long time after, so that all have easy access to them now in the vernacular languages of the country. Had it not been for Rāmānuja, the present book for example would never have been. Modern scholars are just beginning to appreciate him and his work. It would not therefore be out of place to add one or two such testimonies with regard to this veteran Divine Messiah of the Bhakti-School. No one could profess to have an adequate idea of this, unless his life and all his teachings were known. (One of these testimonies, it may be noted, bears directly too on the Drāvidian Literature).

(a). *Komesh Chunder Dutt*: -

"A succession of Hindu religious reformers rose from the eleventh to the nineteenth century, repeating to the listening millions the lessons of

1. Cp. "I am the true vine and my Father is the husbandman."
"I am the vine; you the branches
he that abideth in me, and I in him,

the same beareth much fruit for
without me you can do nothing."
[John XV 1 & 5].

the past, and turning their hearts to the living God, who ministered to the needs of his creatures in their sorrow and in their sufferings."

" Rāmānuja was the first of this glorious band of modern Hindu Reformers. He lived in Southern India in the eleventh century; he proclaimed the unity of God under the name of Viṣṇu; and he preached the love of God as the way to salvation. Sectarian opposition compelled him to fly from his own country, like other prophets he was honoured outside his country; and in Mysore he converted the king and the people to his own faith and established seven hundred monasteries, dedicated to the faith of Viṣṇu." [*The Faith of Ancient India*, contributed to the Humanitarian, July 1900].

(b). H. Rangacharya:—

" His (Rāmānuja's) regard for and reconciliation of the Dravidian Vedas with Sanskrit Upanishads is an attempt made in the right direction, to infuse life and worth into the Vernacular Dialects. His plan of mixing Tamil with Sanskrit is a novel method of literary composition (called *manj-pracāla*) designed for the attraction of readers. His display of psychic powers is the result of his notions that Indians are prone to attach greater value to psychic development than to scholarship and philosophic acumen. Viewed from all standpoints (apart from the consideration that Rāmānuja is an Avatāra—*Febr.*, para 14. P. xiv Preface to our *Gītā*—) Rāmānuja appears to have been a profound philosopher, a noble ornament of the Āryan race, a philanthropic leader of mankind, a wise reformer of extreme moral excellence. Thus we think is the unanimous verdict of the present generations, of a noble life passed away from the midst of our ancestors eight centuries ago." [P. 17 *Life and Teachings of Rāmānuja*].

(c). Annie Besant's "The Three Paths", "the Anniversary Lectures on Avatāra" and the Article on "Devotion" in the Theos. Review, referring to the greatness of Rāmānuja; Dr. Theban's *Vedānta Būtra*, and Max Müller's *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy* all testify to Rāmānuja's Greatness. 1

12. 'God is Love,' as G. J. Romanes said. But more than such a God was Rāmānuja's God, whom, as described and reveal-

1 Another testimony from the manager, *Astrological Magazine*, Mr B. Sūryanārāyaṇa Row B. A. P. R. H. S., M. R. A. S., M. A. S. B. which has just arrived (his letter

d 26-11-90), we are happy to add here "Your *Śrī-Gītā* appears to be splendidly worked out and you have rightly laid the Rāmānuja-community under special, and the world

ed by all the love-saints that went before him,—the monarch of whom was Nammāzhvār—did Rāmānuja proclaim to the world from the tops of temple-towers. His message to man was the inalienability of the relation between God and soul, in its several aspects of love. The main feature of his reform consisted in the declaration of God, not as cold, but as very loving. The words of Max Muller, which may be taken as the mature final verdict resulting from his years of prior deliberations, and which are voiced forth in his last and latest work 'The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy,' confirm this. Says he on page 245 of the said work :—

"We ought, therefore, to look on Rāmānuja as a perfect equal of Śaṅkara, so far as his right of interpreting Bādarāyaṇa's Sūtras, according to his opinion, is concerned. It is the same here as everywhere in Hindu philosophy. The individual philosopher is but the mouth-piece of tradition, and that tradition goes back further and farther, the more we try to fix it chronologically. While Śaṅkara's system is Advaita, i.e. absolute Monism, that of Rāmānuja has been called Viśiṣṭa-Advaita, the doctrine of unity with attributes or monism with a difference. Of course, with Rāmānuja also, Brahman is the highest reality, omnipotent, omniscient, but this Brahman is at the same time full of compassion or love. This is a new and very important feature in Rāmānuja's Brahman as compared with the icy self-sufficiency ascribed to Brahman by Śaṅkara. Even more important and more humanising is the recognition that souls as individuals possess reality, that Chit and Achit, what perceives and what does not perceive, soul and matter, forming as it were, the body of Brahman, are in fact modes (Prakāra) of Brahman."

'This is a new feature,' are Prof: Max Muller's words, but they are liable to be misunderstood. He must be taken to mean that this feature of the Vedānta is not new, but had failed to

under general obligation by bringing before the public the commentaries of that Great Teacher Śri Rāmānujāchārya, who deserves to be much better known than he is

at present among the Western Philosophers. It is always difficult to realize the splendour of their intellects by those who are far below them in intellectual eminence."

receive proper treatment at the hands of monistic philosophers, and it was left to Rāmānuja to expound and declare the same. For the doctrine of a Loving God is as old as the Vedas. Not to cite many passages, one alone from the Rig-Veda [ix-32-5] says, that love between God and souls is as fervid as between a lover and his beloved:—

यौषानारमिनिप्रियम् ॥ ¹

13. This work, *viz.*, the Divine Wisdom of Drāvida Saints will be seen further to prominently teach that *Grace* of God alone is the sole means of salvation; as somewhat hazily taught by Jesus, or Augustine after him, or the Muslim Sūfi,—to this Doctrine the Śaivas alone approaching very closely. That this is *not* a new doctrine, not found in the Vedānta, but only promulgated by Rāmānuja as a new doctrine, and contradictory therefore of the findings of his predecessor Śaṅkara, is evident from the summog up of Pārthasārathi Yogī, given on pages 5 and 6 of his Benedictions of 1895. Thus he writes.—

“Grace on the part of God, whence all began
To flow devotion on the part of man,
Souls godly, as their ~~summar~~ *summa* ~~beams~~ *beams*, hold
The same truth in a sim’lar language told,

1 (a) It is a sorry fact that Orientalists like Edward Gough M. A., and Divines like Rev C Cooper have persistently represented to the world, in their Philosophy of the Upanishads, the cold and inert nature of Brahman as taught in the Upanishads. They have persistently ignored to hear Rāmānuja, nor have they discovered for themselves that their own Christian demand for a righteous God is fully met by such passages as “*apohatu pāpmā*” &c. and God as *love* by such passages as “*Āsando Brahmeti rymjāsat*” &c.

(b). But the latest Advaita-exponent, Vīrekānanda (whose death the whole world is mourning to-day) said:—“Śaṅkara with his great intellect had not, I am afraid, as great a heart. Rāmānuja’s heart was greater. He fell for the down-trodden, he sympathized with them. He took up the ceremonies, the accretions that had gathered, made them pure so far as could be, and instituted new ceremonies, new methods of worship for the people who absolutely required these. At the same time he opened the

E'en now is Śaṅkarāchārya's Padakota speech¹ :—
 So doth Mahā-Nārāyaṇa Upanishad teach ;
 And also, Udhā-Lectare Fifteen, fifteenth verse,
 And well-known Gāyatrī, in words both sweet and terse.
 Drived! then, should consider if he may not
 Recant th' abuse found in the sentences I quote
 And which he tells us all, he as Advaita wrote."

'Yet, brethren,' says the Yōgi, 'bhūktī, smṛitī and prajñā are the very words used in the speech of Śaṅkarāchārya just cited by me, in the Kaṭha Up. II. 30 in the Śvetāśvatara Up. III. 27. VI. 23; in the Mahā Nārāyaṇa Up. VIII. 3, and in the Gītā. XVIII. 36, 39, 62. 72, VIII. 10, 22; IX. 14, 36, 29; XIII. 10; XVIII. 54, 56. 68; XII. 17, 19, and even in the first Śaṅkarāchārya's well-known hymn, the prominent idea of which is contained in the words; "*Bhaya* Gacchedam, *mūḍha* mate," i. e., to Gaviṇā or 'God come on earth.' devote thyself, O fool "'

door to the highest spiritual worship from the Brahmin to the Pariah"—*Brahma-sūtra* p. 494. Vol. VII 1902.]

1. *Hindu*, Madras, dated. 3-4-89.

2. The reference here is to page 328. Barrow's Prajñamā of Religions:—"The one old teaching was the idea of the All, usually known as the Advaita or the Vedānta. In the ethical aspect of this philosophy, stress has been laid on knowledge (*gnosis*) and free action. Under the debasing influence of a foreign yoke, these sober paths of knowledge and action had to make room for devotion and grace. On devotion and grace as their principal ethical tenets, three important schools of philosophy arose in the period after the Parāśara. Besides the ancient Advaita, we have the Dvaita, the Viśvādvaita, and the Viśvādvaita schools of Philosophy in this period.

The first is purely dualistic, postulating two separate yet co-ordinate existence of mind and matter. The second and third profess to be unitarian, but is a considerably modified sense of the word. The Viśvādvaita teaches the unity of the cosmos, but it insists on the All, having certain attributes, which endow it with the desire to manifest itself as the cosmos. The third system is purely dualistic though it goes by the name of modified unitarianism. It maintains the unity of *chit* (soul), *achit* (matter), and *īśvara* (God), each in its own sphere, the third member of this triad governing all and pervading the whole though not apart from the cosmos. Thus widely differing in their philosophy from the Advaita, these three Sampradāya [or streams of "tradition"] (each a system) of ethics entirely opposed to the one taught in that ancient school called Dharma in the Advaita. They

14. Watching the signs of the times, we are aware of the ardent wish which on all sides is expressed for better and better conceptions of God. This want arises from a persistent ignorance of the past, for such conceptions of the Deity have already been vouchsafed to yearning hearts like the Saints, but which have failed to be reached by the highest flights of modern thought. For example, Rev. E. J. Fripp B.A., in the concluding paragraph of his obituary of Rev. Dr. Martineau, the great thinker of the age, says with regard to his philosophy and with regard to the new conceptions of the Deity which this scientific age hungers after, that—

“ But rightly interpreted, a philosophy that teaches the divine in all souls, that reveals the authority for good in every heart and conscience, and proclaims in a new and deep sense the Fatherhood of God to all men and women . . . is the recognition of universal rights and sacred obligations compared with which the rights and obligations of possession, blood, race, rank, and education are altogether secondary. The religious future is with those who feel and enter this, and make great sacrifices for it. But in order to do this, something farther is required. We want a new conception of God, the Father Himself. We have discovered that we are children of the Highest, but what is He? Not a benevolent Being who has put us here on probation and calls on us from the height of His superiority to overcome evil which baffles our thought, but a Being who

displace *jñāna* by *bhakti*, and *harma* by *prajñā*; that is to say, in other words, place the highest happiness in obtaining the grace of God by entire devotion, physical, mental, moral and spiritual.”

It may be incidentally remarked here that the so-called solar path of “*gyāna*,” which demands a disillusioning on the part of man that he is not what he is, but God, makes all morality unnecessary, murder a virtue, and moral responsibility a huge bug-bear as an Advaiti gentleman himself wrote [Vide p. 203 ff

Vol I Christian College Magazine]. But the path of Love to God as pointed out by Rāmānuja is the greatest incentive to virtue, and points man out to be a morally responsible and spiritual being in addition to the great background of emotion guiding him in every aspiration. When man and the universe are ever moved by emotion, the spirit of a cold and loveless Brahman becomes a mere impossibility. No one with a heart throbbing can possibly conceive such an Entity.

is Himself the heart of all this groaning world, of it, and in it and agonizing for it, a supreme and infinite Hero who summons us to work and triumph with Him, to run again perpetually to higher life. A God who does not Himself suffer is not the God of this creation, nor can He command the enthusiastic devotion of men. To make self-sacrifices we must worship Infinite Self-sacrifice."

It causes us great surprise that even after centuries of intercourse between the East and the West, the conception of God as the Indian Vedānta has from eternity proclaimed forth to the world and which the Drāvida Saints have reiterated loudly in their turn,—the conception of God, which according to these saints is not a mere weaving of their human fancy, but one that is actually realized by the passing of their consciousness into the realms of the spirit, the very *sacrum sanctorum* of the purified heart—should yet have escaped comprehension by the Western mind, as may be judged from Rev. Frapp's confession aforesaid. Take the idea of the "Sacrifice of God" for example. Shall we cite the Purusha-Sūkta, Viṣṇu Purāṇa,¹ and Harivamṣa² &c., representing God as the *Universal Sacrifice*? Shall we cite the Śvetāśvataraupaniṣad &c., representing Him as the *Mother-Father*? Shall we cite Taittiriyaupaniṣad &c., representing Him as He who *dwells in every heart*? Shall we cite Bāmāyaṇa &c., revealing Him as more *agonizing* for the sorrows of mortals than they for themselves can? Shall we cite all the Prabandhas, or ravishing Divine Experiences of St. Nammāzhvār and other Saints of the Drāvid Land, representing Him as *loving us infinitely more*, or as much more indeed as He is greater than our little selves? To cite thus would now be prolix. But let the readers refer for example to the several Topics of the work we are now introducing to them and ponder

1. See I-4 for symbolic interpretations, treating of the Sacrifice-Board of Viṣṇu for example.

2. See Harivamṣa, 1st Division,

42nd Chapter, treating of the Sacrifice-Board and also the universal Sacrificial nature of Viṣṇu Himself.

over the ideas contained therein. For their benefit we transcribe one verse taken from St. Nammāzhvār, and give its free paraphrase :—

சகல வானவர்மேம்பென வருவதெனது
தேசமே திருவேங்கடத்தாறுக்கு
கேசவன் லீலையெனது மிகெவ்வவகை
பாசம்மெனத்த பரவாடச் சொதிக்கே.

T. V. Mośhi. III 3,4.]

“Holy Lord of the Hill of Venkātachalam ! If Thou art the Lord of but the celestials, what glory doth that give Thee ? Who careth for such a Lord (*there*, not *here*) ? If Thou art the Lord of Heaven surrounded by Angels, Thy Light and their light all mingle into one light, and Thou art thus not singled out in glory. But Thy light in the midst of our darkness, *here* alone, can so much the more bright be ; nay, the more glorified be by the back-ground, we present, of darkness ! Not by Thy Majesty art Thou great, but by Thy Grace, by Thy Condescension to us ! Not for Thy might art Thou adored, but by Thy Grace to Thy humble creatures, sunk in sorrow ! With Thee as unapproachable, unattainable and invisible, concern we have none ; but with Thee as the nearest, dearest and most patent to our heart and understanding is our concern ! With us *here*, hast Thou full scope for Thy Grace ; there in Heaven, none ! Set then Thine eyes on my abject self here ; become the Way to the wayless ! Thus alone canst Thou be God indeed ! ”

Nor has the Western Thinker as yet fully realised the Deity in the aspect of Avatāras, or Incarnations, recognised but recently by such thinkers as Cardinal Newman, as the Doctrine purely original with the Hindus and adopted by the Christians.

15. In this work much light is also thrown on the point whether God is a mere *Principle* or *Person*. That He is certainly both, is Rāmānuja’s decision, based on the Scriptures of the Saints and Sages preceding Him.

Rāmānuja, like his Holy Guru Yāmunāchārya, showed the impossibility of conceiving abstract Deity by the human mind, as it is constituted, for :-

अर्थेनैवविशेषोहि निराकारतयाधियाम् ॥

“By concrete pictures alone is our otherwise indefinite consciousness rendered definite; in other words, what is formless is by such pictures rendered into form.”

He contended that the attempt to conceive Deity as an *Abstract Essence* is simply an impossibility. And it is not only our intellectual nature to which such a conception is impossible, but our moral nature also revolts from it. We believe that God holds an important personal relation to ourselves. He is our Creator, our Father, our Judge. We cannot think of these relations except as belonging to a Being who is most intimately linked to us. The idea therefore of an abstract, absolute, unconceivable Essence is impossible, and incompatible with ideas of relations such as those of Creator, Father, Judge, Donor &c. So called absoluteness as being the highest logical abstraction is to Rāmānuja inconceivable and illogical and endangers God's very existence. Further, we cannot know or conceive of an abstraction as divorced from every kind of relation. The relation of things is absolutely essential to knowledge. And again, this abstract Being cannot be God, because it cannot be a Cause; for as abstract, it cannot hold relations with concrete things; it is perfectly empty of all qualities, and therefore destitute of every thing which makes up man's idea of the Divine Being.

16. It is on such philosophical arguments, the several Holy Shrines extant in India have been instituted, and God is made visible therein in Forms emblematic of the several relations in which He stands to His Universe and His creatures dwelling therein. All the Saints and Sages paid their homage

here and realised God therein. One Form of Vishnu, for example, stands as the Symbol for many Universal Truths combined. His *Kaustubha*-gem is the *chit*-part of His body, or the multitude of souls. The *Śrivatsa* mark is the *achit*-part or the sum of non-intelligent material existences. The *conch-shell* and the *bow* stand for the two-fold division of egotism. The *discus* stands for mind and motion. The necklace *Vajrayanti* is made up of the pearl, ruby, emerald, sapphire and diamond—the emblems of the five elements. The sword *Nandaka* represents knowledge, sheathed in the *scabbard* of ignorance, and so on.¹

17. This work goes forth with our prayer that as religious truths are there shown as universal, harmony may for ever be established between man and man, for "Every Scripture inspired of God is profitable to teach, to reprove and to correct, and to instruct which is in righteousness" [2 Tim. iii.—16]. That 'the theology of the Twentieth Century will probably be a composite of the different explanations of differing schools of sincere thought put together by the sympathetic combining mind' is the prophetic utterance of Rev. W. W. Peyton [p. 713, Contemp. Review for May 1900]. Though no country has been denied the privilege of producing Saints, some countries have by Providence been specially permitted to claim possession of the most illustrious among them, to exercise such world-wide influence as to bring as many as possible of His straying flock back to His fold. The wisdom of this work is mainly based on the work of one such Saint, Nammāzhvār, called Tiruvāy-Mozhi or Dramadopanishad, and its learned commentaries written under the inspiration and impulse given to religious thought, righteousness and love by Śrī Rāmānujāchārya.

1. Read Bhāgavata XII 11, and the *Āshvāra*, Symbology, p. 117; Introduction to our "Holy Lives of" and Topic 171, p. 195 f.

18. Finally, we must warn our Christian Brethren against falling into the error of supposing that the sublime Doctrines of Faith, Grace, Love, Salvation by mediation, and by atonement, Motherhood of God, Image-Worship, Incarnation-Doctrine &c. held by ancient Saints of India, must have been borrowed from Christian Scriptures, as Dr. Lorinser imagined Bhagavad-gītā as a borrowal from the Bible.* That the former is as much an anachronism as the latter is a gratuitous assumption, has been proved beyond all doubt, inasmuch as Lord Krishna antedates Jesus by nearly three thousand years.¹ And

1 (a) Professor Decker, after duly considering the matter, says thus 'it is not impossible that the 23 reigns which the Matsya Purāṇa gives to the Bārhadrathas, may have filled up the time from the year 1418 to the year 203 B. C.' and that Parikshit commenced his reign in the former year." This negatives all possibility of the teaching of Krishna (who belonged to the generation that preceded Parikshit, having been borrowed from any Christian source." [S. Pārthasārathi Yogi's Supplement ix. on Hinduism p. 36]

(b) The story of the Mahābhārata was extant in the time of Pāṇini, the great grammarian who flourished in the 12th or 13th century, B. C. when neither the Upanishads nor the Brāhmaṇas of the Vedas are said to have yet been reduced to writing. *Gurī yudhiṣṭhīyasa āthirah' [Pāṇini. viii 3-35] refers to Yudhiṣṭhira. *Strigāsa evanti Kuntī Kuruṇḍhyah [Id. iv. 1 76] refers to Kuntī. Yudhiṣṭhira's 'mother' *Pāṇḍuravajayāyudhyah' [iv. 3-28] refers to Arjuna and Vāsanādeva

(= Krishna) &c. &c. &c. [P. 48 of Hinduism. Ancient and Modern. by Lala Baijuath. B. A.]

(c) The date of the great War, according to the Hindu chronology goes farther than five thousand years. But the date acknowledged by all the Oriental Scholars falls in the 14th cent. B. C. Happily we have some accounts of trustworthy historical records which with other proofs corroborate the latter as nearly accurate. We know for certain that Bimbisāra of Magadha, the contemporary of Buddha and the 52nd in descent from Jarāsandha connected with the great War, lived in the 5th cent. B. C. If we allow an average period of 20 years for the reign of each of the 41 kings, the Great War must have taken place in the 15th cent. B. C. and at any rate, it may be established that it is not after the 14th century B. C. *Foot note, p. 160, Vol. IV, Siddhānta-Dīpikā].

(d) See Foot note 2 Page 6, Introduction I, 'Five Topics' by Pārthasārathi Yogi.

our Saint Nammāzhvār was born just forty-three days after the Ascension of Krishna.¹ To silence all critics finally on this unjust charge of plagiarism, which the West is so fond of unputing to the East, we shall satisfy ourselves by quoting one paragraph from an eminent scholar of the West itself, Samuel Johnson. He says in his *Oriental Religions*, p. 101, Vol. II :—

“In like manner the discovery by Christian scholars, in their study of Hindū Religion, of what they may regard as faint heathen “foregleams and dim presentments of Christian truths,”—such as trinity, atonement by the saint for the sinner, and salvation by the merits of the saint,—justifies no expectation that the *Christian* forms of these beliefs, as “based on truth instead of dream,” must be recognized by the heathen mind as that for which it was yearning, and for which its way has been prepared. The resemblances simply show that, even as believers in such conceptions and doctrinal forms, the Hindūs can satisfy their desire through their own sacred books, legends and dogmatic constructions, without resorting to the Christian.”²

How unjust, in the face of such array of facts, it is, on the part of Christian Authors, to write against the Hindūs, in such terms as the following, will be plain to every impartial reader :—

“We hold that the Theology of nature (Hinduism) sheds powerful light on the being of a God, and even from its unaided demonstrations we can reach a considerable degree of probability, both for His moral and natural attributes. But when it undertakes the question between God and man, this is what it finds to be impracticable. It is baffled in all its attempts to decipher the state, and the prospects of man, viewed in the

1. See our Holy Lives of Saints, Introd. “*The Age &c.*”

2. The reader may peruse the most interesting collection of evidence on this point made by our

Veteran Brother Dewan Bahadur R. Raghunatha Row, in his article on “Vedic Religion,” in the *Ārya*, Madras. Vol I.

relation of an offending subject, to an offended sovereign. In a word, its chief obscurity, and which it is wholly unable to dispense, is that which rests on the hopes and the destiny of our species. There is in it enough of manifestation to awaken the fears of 'guilty' but not enough again to appease them. It emits and audibly emits a note of terror, but in vain do we listen for one authentic word of comfort, from any of its oracles. It is able to see the danger, but not the deliverance. It can excite the forebodings of the human spirits, but cannot quell them, knowing just enough to stir the perplexity at rest. It can state the difficulty, but cannot unriddle the difficulty, having just as much knowledge as to enunciate the problem, but not so much as might lead to the solution of the problem. There must be a measure of light, we do allow; like the lurid gleam of a volcano, it is not a light which guides, but which bewilders and terrifies. It prompts the question but cannot furnish or frame the reply. Natural (Blindoo) theology may see as much as shall draw forth the anxious interrogation:—"What shall I do to be saved!" The answer to this, comes from a higher theology." [Bridge Water Treatise. Vol. II P. 285.]

But read this Ancient Wisdom and recall such ignorant and unjust impeachments.



THE DIVINE WISDOM OF THE DRAVIDA SAINTS,

Śrī-mate Nārāyaṇāya † namah.

‘Sole for the Gracious * All †, I am,
For me or mine, I never am.’

TOPIC I.

What is True Renunciation ?

What doth ‘Renunciation’ mean? Is it possible to renounce the world? Is it possible to annihilate the world? Neither is possible, for in order to renounce the world, one must pass beyond its bounds, and in order to annihilate the world, one must be able to annihilate God’s work † But it may be suggested that renouncement could be effected by fleeing away from the haunts of men where ills abound, and living in a forest in solitude where no temptations could come to molest. To this method of renunciation, however, the episodes of Ādi Bharata (or Jaḍa-Bharata) † and of Saubhari ‡ prove contrary. For, the former, though he had renounced the world and was residing in the woods, was inveigled into ties of affection for a deer, and had consequently to migrate into the form of a deer. The latter (Saubhari), though he had abandoned the world and had lived a recluse in the wilderness, was, when he once went to

* This is a short rendering of Śrī. On Motherhood of God, vide infra Topic 17

[Also read Note XIII on the Bride or Parā-Śakti. p. lxxxii. Dr. Pope’s Tiruvāchakan.]

† A short rendering of Nārāyaṇa.

‡ For the story of Jaḍa-Bharata,

consult Viṣṇu-Purāṇa, II-31, and also Bhāgavata.

‡ For the story of Saubhari, refer to Viṣṇu-Purāṇa IV 7, and also Bhāgavata, and also read a psychological discussion on this theme in Lokāchārya’s Tatva-traya, Chit-prakaraṇa [Pārthasarathi Yogī’s edition.]

bathe in a pond, tempted into admiring the worldly life which a mother-fish with its numerous progeny—playfully surrounding her—led therein. Heart thus lured, he entered into married life. So, true renunciation¹ is not secured by such bodily displacements. True renunciation is of the mind. It consists in giving up the erroneous notions of 'I' and 'mine', inhering in the mind, as St. Nannāzhvār² taught [Drami-
dopanishad or Tiruvāimozhi. I, 2 3.]

‘கீர்துடதெனநிலை
வோயுதல் மாயத்திறை
சேரமின.’

‘The errors of ‘I ness,’ ‘My-ness,’

With roots pluck out and join the Lord.’

‘I ness consists in misapprehending ‘body’ for ‘soul.’
‘My ness consists in misapprehending all belongings apper-
taining to the body as soul’s own. Renunciation consists in
the mind disengaging itself from these errors’ Examples of
such mental renunciation are found in King Janaka and Saint
Kulasekhara³ as follow:—

Śuka Rishi was once giving spiritual instruction to King
Janaka and other Rishis congregated in the King’s palace.
Śuka all the time directed his glances to the King and not to
the others. The others attributed this behaviour of Śuka to
worldly motives on his part in order to insinuate himself into

¹ Read the following verses
defining true renunciation

वनेषिदोषा प्रभवन्ति रागिण्यो ।

गृहेषु परोन्द्रिय निग्रहस्यः ।

अकुत्सिते कर्मणि यः प्रवर्तते ।

निवृत्तरागस्य गृहं तपो वनम् ॥

[Itihāsa-samucchaya: 13th Adh.]

Read the most interesting Chap-
ters II & III of Theologia Germanica

by S. Winkworth. In Ch. XV
it is written: ‘A man should so
stand free being quit of himself,
that is, of his I and Me and Self and
Mine, and the like, that in all things
he should no more seek or regard
himself than if he did not exist, &c.’

² For the place these Royal
Saints occupy in the Hierarchy,
refer to table annexed at end of in-
troduction to this work,

the good graces of the King, and thus to obtain from him worldly goods for his own benefit. Śuka read into their thoughts, and in order to vindicate Janaka's spiritual superiority over them all, and thus to justify his own particular attention to him, employed a test. He produced an illusion in which the Rishis¹ assembled saw Mithila, the capital city of Janaka, as well as their own retreats in the suburbs, in flames. Thereon the Rishis in panic ran in different directions, one crying: "Oh! my water jug is gone;" another: "Alas! My deer skin is burnt," another: "My God! my poor robes have been done to ashes," yet another "Lo! My couch has disappeared" and so on. Whereas King Janaka sat in perfect unconcern and composure, and though he espied all his Nine Treasures devoured by fire, before his very eyes, he yet quietly exclaimed: "If Mithila is burnt, it is Mithila burnt. What is it to me?"² The Rishis, on the other hand, who flew to their retreats, found to their astonishment nothing burnt, but returned to Śuka with heads bent down for shame.

'Do ye now see, Brethren,' said Śuka "the reason for my particular attentions to Janaka? His, indeed, is true renunciation.'

Saint Kuṣasekhara, (the King) also sung his true renunciation in his Perumāḷ Tirumozhi thus:—

“ஊனேறு செவ்வதூதற்பிறவி யான் வேண்டேன்.”

'Desire I not bodily births

Which pamper to the wants of flesh' [IV. 1].

“இன்பமதுஞ் செவ்வமு மீவகரகம் யான் வேண்டேன்”

'Desire I not delights of sense

Nor Sov'reignty ov'r all this earth' [IV. 5]

¹ Means sages and saints.

न मे विधित्यस्यते '

² Vide Mahā bhā : Moksha-Dharma 103. 4; which says:—

then read Mahopaniṣad, 2nd Adhyāya about Janaka's greatness.

'विधित्यां प्रदग्धायां'

Saint Nammāzhvār himself exclaimed —

“யானே யெனனை யறியவில்லை
யானே யெனநனனேயெனநஞ்சேதன”

‘Myself’ I, not understanding,
Labourèd under ‘I’ and ‘mine’.

[Bhagavad-Vishaya, Bk. I, p. 79. Introduction] *

* Cp. ‘Who says conceit that utters ‘I’ and ‘Mine,’ shall enter realms above the powers divine [Pope’s Kurral, 346].

* Consider the following reflections on this theme

(a) Cp. Bhāgavata, V. 1. where Brāhmā preaches king Prayātrata, Jha

ममं प्रमत्तस्य वनेष्वपि स्यात् ।

यनस्म आत्मे सहपदं सपत्नः ।

जितेन्द्रियम्यात्मरतेन्दुधस्य

गृहाश्रमं किन्तु कोलवचसम् ॥ १७ ॥

सख्यद्वन्द्वसन् विजिगीषुभागे

गृहेषु निविश्य यतेत पूर्वं ।

अत्यन्तिदुर्गाग्रित ऊजितारम्

क्षीणेषु काम विचरेद्विपश्चित् ॥ १८ ॥

त्वं लब्धनाभाक्षि मरोजकोष्ठ

दुर्गाग्रितो निर्वृति षट् सपत्नः ।

भूक्षेहेभोगान् पुक्यानिदिशन्

विमुक्त संघः प्रकृति भवस्य ॥ १९ ॥

(b) The whole of Bhagavad-Gita is a discourse on what true renunciation consists in. Among others, meditate on the verse [1: 23].

न मेपार्थास्तिकर्तव्यं त्रिषुलोके किञ्च ।

नानवाप्त मवाप्तव्यं वर्त एव च कर्मभिः ॥

(c) ‘If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, you and his own life also he cannot be my disciple’ [Luke XIV 26].

Commentary on this. The law of Christ does not allow us to hate even our enemies, much less our parents but the meaning of the text is that we must be in that disposition of soul as to be willing to

renounce and part with every thing how dear or dearer soever it may be to us, that would keep us from following Christ.

(d) ‘This therefore, I say, brethren: the time is short, it remaineth, that they also who have wives, be as if they had none.’ 29.

‘And they that weep, as though they wept not, and they that rejoice, as if they rejoiced not, and they that buy, as though they possessed not.’ 30.

‘And they that use this world as if they used it not for the fashion of this world passeth away’ 31.

‘that I would hate you to be without solicitude.’ 32.

[1 Cor. VII.]

(e) The riddles contained in the following sayings are with reference to renunciation and self-sacrifice.

(1) ‘He that loveth his life shall lose it and he that hateth his life in this world keepeth it unto life eternal’ [John. XII., 25.]

(2) ‘If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me’

[Matt. XVI 24.]

(3) ‘Die and re-exist for until this is accomplished thou art but a troubled guest upon an earth of gloom’ [German Goethe.]

(f) (1) ‘The more the Self the I, the Me, the Mine, i.e., self-seeking and selfishness abate in a man, the more doth God’s I, i.e., God Himself, increase in him.’

[Theo. Germ., Ch. XV.]

(2) In other words, renunciation of the mind means the surrendering of one’s own will to God’s. In Theology in Germanics [P. XXXVII], Intro. it is written: ‘Self-renunciation, the complete giving up of self-will to the will of God.’

TOPIC 2.

The Natural Relation between God and Souls as between Lord and Loidge.

"And me, His' sweet perfections drew
To follow as His' servant true."

[Râmâyana IV., 4, 11½.]

The above is part of Lakshmana's speech to Hanumân in the Kishkindhâ-Kânda, in reply to the latter's inquiry as to who they were and why they came to the forest.

Lakshmana.—Râma comes to the forest (for fourteen years) to fulfil as a dutiful son ought, the command of his father Dasaratha. Sîtâ follows him as a faithful wife. Râma thinks that I follow him as but an ordinary follower, induced merely by my kinship to him as his younger brother.

Hanumân.—But, what are *thy* motives in following him?

Lakshmana. I follow Him, because I am *not mine but His* (= *paravan asmi*)²; and this union (as of subject and predicate) is further confirmed by the Divine perfections of His character captivating me to Himself. From the relation of this love of union, of esteem and of admiration, proceeds my service to Him,—service such that the natural rights Râma has of buying and selling me, demand.

1 i. e., Râma's.

2 This corresponds nearly to the Biblical expression—"Of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things." [Rom XI, 36]. R. Harvey, M.A., L.L.D., in his article "The Place of Agnosticism in Religion," p. 141, Vol. I. *Christian College Magazine* says.—"And if we will only fairly, steadily, and reverently attend to and meditate upon the order of reality (viz., the inner order of

consciousness, of righteousness, holiness, &c., flowing into it from a Being), to which these elements (righteousness, holiness, truth, &c.) belong, we shall, I feel confident, find that it will assume a majesty and authority before which our spirits will bow in humble adoration, and a reality before which all other realities will pale. It will more and more be seen to be the one eternal and necessary Being and will else to exist for His sake only."

Thus do I stand to Him, not in the mere relation of co-born brother (as he thinks), but as leige, vassal, servant to him;—as his sole possession having the character of disposability as may suit His sovereign will and pleasure.¹

[*Vide* Bhag. Vish., Bk. I, p. 97 "Uyarvara." l. 1. 1.]²

TOPIC 3

God of Bliss and Love, or God of Attributes.

St. Parāṅkṣa (Nammāzhvār)³ characterises God as one with perfections (*namam*), all of the nature of bliss and love.⁴ In the course of conversation, Śrī vatsīka-misra (Āzhvān)⁵

1 This is illustrative of the fundamental of the disinterested lover of God, demanded of all who are of the faith of Rāmānuja, and embodied in the Holy Eight-Syllabled Mantra (*vide* *infra* Topic 14)

Taylor says 'Much more we must scorn all idea of reward, that we may love God only because He is the Supreme Good.'

2 *I. Theologia Germanica.*

3 Cp. 'The Maker justly claims the world He made'

4 In this the right of Providence is said. [Parnell's Hermit.]

5 These refer to the Canto, Decad and Verse of Saint Nammāzhvār's *Tiruvāmozhi*. [Read his life.]

6 *I. de Hierarchie Table*

7 God intrinsically gloried with (a) knowledge and (b) bliss. (a) *nam* (b) are the primary attributes characterising the Godhead. They are the chief qualities, indicative of His essence as (c) Being. (a), (b) and (c) thus correspond to the Christian Trinity (a) Son, (b) Holy Ghost, and (c) Father. St. Francis

de Sales writes in his "Treatise on Love of God" thus —

"In the holy and undivided Trinity the Son, = the eternal word (Veda) incarnate, is engendered by the Father (Sat) and is the term of his knowledge (Chit) [hence the Father is the *Veda-parashu*]; the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, and in the term of their mutual love (*Ānanda*):" Thus ponder over the epithet *Sat-Chit-Ānanda* applied to the Godhead

Also *vide* pp. 6, 7 & 221 English translation (by the author) of Rāmānuja's Commentaries on Bhagavad Gita

Also read Dr F W Faber's "Creator and the Creature," pp. 287 to 291 Ch. IV Bk. iii.

Also read *Tatva-traya* by Parthasarathi Yogi. p. 103. and J M Nallasāmi's 'Light of Grace,' p. 8, Note 2.

8 The first and chief disciple of Rāmānuja, [*vide* *Hierarchy Table*.]

addressed Pillaip-pillai thus:—Is it not matter for congratulation that on St. Parāṅkusa's authority, we have a God of attributes, which ought to silence all those who philosophise on a God *devoid* of attributes? Does not Vishnu Purāṇa (VI, 5-84) corroborate this? "He is the Essence possessing all blissful perfections"? Does not Karna, in the Bhīshma Parva of the Mahābhārata, say:—"Were all the worlds assembled together, and were they all to praise the perfections of the great victorious Vishnu (born as Kṛṣṇa, Vasudeva's son, bearing the discus, conch and sword) for a million million years, would it even then reach the end of exhaustion?" Did not Lady Tārā (among other things) tell Vāli her husband [Rāmāyaṇa IV, 15, 21.]

"In Him the noblest glories meet"?

Did not the royal guests, assembled at Daśaratha's court, proclaim thus:—

"Each noblest gift of form and mind,
O Monarch, in thy Son we find.
Do thou the god-like virtues hear,
Which Rāma to our hearts endear
So richly blest with graces, none
In all the earth excels thy Son."

[Rāmāyaṇa II, Canto, ii.]

And does not Yāmuna Munī¹ (or Ālavandār, the Guru of Rāmānuja) sum up in his verse *svabhāvika*,² &c., as follows:—

"He is one possessing an infinitude of super-excellent auspicious perfections conformable to His Divine character"?

[*Vide* Bhag. Vish., Bk. I, p. 102. "Uyayvu," I, 1, 1.]

¹ Who flourished in 916 A. C.
[*Vide* Retracing Table.]

² The 11th verse in his *Stotra-Ratna*. [Engl. Trans. by Pārthasarathi Yogi.]

TOPIC 4.

God's Grace dispels Ignorance.

Nambīllai¹ explained the terms (a) *jñānīnūdaya*,² (b) *Anya-tha jñāna*³ and (c) *Viparīta-jñāna*⁴ thus:—

(a) Non-Apprehension—the error of taking the body for the soul.

(b) Wrong Apprehension—the error of owing allegiance to other gods but the one God.

(c) Reserved-Apprehension—the error of thinking that the soul is independent, (whereas it is dependent on God); and is self-enjoyable, (whereas its enjoyment belongs by right to God). [This is the Kevalī or jñānī class.]

Saint Parāṇkusa exclaimed: “That I have been illuminated thus,—viz., (a), (b) & (c) annihilated without trace—is evidence of God's Free Grace—a gift of his Sovereign Charity.”

(Bhag. Vish., Bk. I, p. 106. “Uyaru,” I, 1 1)

TOPIC 5.

Loving Service to God is the ‘all’ of Saints.

Saint Namināzhiār's expression “wisdom-love” (= *madi natam*) has been expanded thus:—

1st Interpretation.—God gave me ‘wisdom’ as also ‘love.’

2nd Interpretation by Parāśara Bhattārya⁴—“God gave me ‘loving wisdom’ or wisdom partaking of the nature of love (to God), vigorous from the very root like the tree Karuṅḡi.⁵ In ordinary cases, love of God is a growth from

¹ Flourished in 1127 A. C. [Vide Hierarchic Table.]

² For explanation of these terms vide Parthasarathi Yogī's Tattva-traya, pp. 26, 38, & 41 (Note 15.)

³ Vide p. 342 Bk. G. A. by Author

⁴ The son of Āshvān, flourished 1074 A. C. [Vide Hierarchic Table.]

⁵ *Acacia Catechu* or *Bandra*, A heavy hard wood.

acts of virtue, but in the case of Nammāzhvār, God's spontaneous Grace occupied the place of such acts and love, by one's self-effort; and love to God in our Saint's case is no other than the heart and mind perfectly disposed and attuned to the loving service of God.

3rd Interpretation:—They asked Embār¹ whether St. Nammāzhvār was one characterised by love to God (*Bhakti*), or characterised by surrender to the will of God (*Prapatti*). He replied that the Saint was the latter, or one whose will was conformable with God's, or who had surrendered his will entirely to Him; and that love to God in his case was simply a habit of his by which he sustained his being.² Ordinarily we can also be resigned to God's will, but employed too in obtaining food for six months or a year, whereas food, drink and every other luxury was to this saint, God Kṛishṇa Himself."³

[Bhag: Vish., p. 107, Bk. I, "Uyaru" I.1.1.]

TOPIC 6.

God the Cause of Motion as well as Rest.

They asked Embār¹:—If all our actions or motions are dependent on God and therefore proceed from God, is God required again to bring our activity to rest?

Embār¹ replied:—"Yes, God in all cases. Do you know not that Viṣvānūtra was required to arrest the fall (or motion,)

¹ Flourished in 1026 A. C., contemporary, disciple and relative of Rāmānuja [Vide Hierarchy Table.]

² Read Ch: V. Theol: Germ:

³ Cp "I seemed indeed to eat, and to drink with you but I use an invisible meat and drink, which cannot be seen by men [Tobias XII. 19.] Read St. John VI. 48-58.

of Triṣanku¹ from paradise (Svarga)? In the same manner, only God can give us rest or peace, (only He can so will, in other words, we are entirely in His hands for our salvation and all the processes previous to this by which He brings about such a consummation)."²

[Bhag. Vish., Bk. I, p. 149. "Ninṇanar" l. 1.6.]

TOPIC 7.

The Chief Characteristic of Godly Men.

Naḷiyar³ often expressed — "Any one can test himself whether he be a real Vaishṇava⁴ or no. If, when seeing others' adversities or adversity his pity be excited, and he do ejaculate "oh", he may know himself as a true Vaishṇava⁴, but if his breast be steeled against others' tribulation and further vitiated by emotions of vile pleasure surging up at its sight, he may know himself as not belonging to such a holy band. To be a Vaishṇava⁴ is to belong to God, and *vice versa*. To belong to God is to be like God Himself, i.e., conform to the

¹ Triṣanku is a king of the solar line seventh in descent from Ikshvāku. He applied to his family Chaplain Vasiṣṭha to help him perform a rite to win him a way to heaven alive, but Vasiṣṭha as well as his hundred sons, to whom also in return the king applied, pronounced such a request as beyond his scope and a transgression of the law of the world. Triṣanku replying that he would bid adieu to them and seek others' aid, was cursed to turn into a vile Chaṇḍālā caste. He now sought Viśvāmītra, who, by the power of his penance, bid Triṣanku ascend heaven. But Indra, its Lord cried:—

'With thy best speed Triṣanku, flee. There is no home prepared for thee! By thy great master's curse brought low

Go, falling headlong, earthward go." And screaming in his swift descent "O, save me Hermit!" down he went, And Viśvāmītra heard his cry, And marked him falling from the sky, And giving all his passion away Cried out in fury, 'Stay, O Stay.' [Rāmāyaṇa I., 57 to 60.]

² Read 'Cpakara-Saṅgraha,' by Vedāntachārya.

³ Vide Hierarchic Table.

⁴ Viṣṇu conceives God in his all-pervasive character, or omnipresence. And so a Vaishṇava is one who always realises such Presence, or walks in such Presence. When He so realises, he can be but friendly to all. Vaishṇava briefly means Godly. [Read Ch. I, 6th Treatise, p. 333, Vol. I., Rodriguez, Christian and Religious Perfection].

ideals which He has preached and practised; one of these ideals being to be "The Friend of all Creatures."¹

[Bhag. Vish., Bk. I., pp. 188-189. "Vidumin".]

TOPIC 8.

The Beauty of God.

Bhattachārya, as he went one day, found a certain man returning from the (Kāveri) river in the company of a sweet-eyed damsel, and as he walked along, he screened her lovable eyes in eager solicitude, against any accident (such as dust, glare, &c.) happening to them. Bhattachārya accosted him and asked;—

'Friend! What maketh thee to be so attentive to her?'

'Oh! the eyes are so lovely, so delicate and charming—'

'Bhattachārya.' Is it for these eyes thy heart is so vanquished? Supposing I should show you more beautiful eyes?'

So saying, he took the man into the Temple at Srīrangam² and directed his attention to the Divine eyes of Ranganātha, there. Forthwith the man became so enamoured of the Divine that he resigned his carnal love for spiritual love.

(This anecdote is typical of the sacrifice of worldly appetites to the surpassing love and beauty of God, or supreme preference to God as against the adulterations of sense and disposal of the heart to earthly things.)

[Bhag. Vish., Bk. I., p. 189. "Vidumin" I. 2.1.]

TOPIC 9.

Winning Men to Wisdom by short ways and means; or heart turned to God by a Clever piece of Policy.

Saint Nammāzhvār exhorted men to surrender themselves to "Him who is the Granter of Heaven" (= *Āṇḍaṁ āṇḍaṁ*) in

¹ Vide Bhag. Gl. V., 29. by the Author.

of these terms, read article 'Sambhavanam by a Recluse'.

² For the esoteric significance

[P. 66. Awakened India, Vol. I.]

Dramīdopanishad I., 2-1, "Vidumin." If it be questioned why our Saint did not directly say 'Nārāyaṇa' at once, it is answered that the reason to so refrain from revealing the Holy Name at once, but to adopt this circumlocutory (or periphrastic) style, is to set the mind on to inquire Who the 'Granter of Heaven' is and so on gradually lead it to the knowledge of the Highest Mystery. That otherwise the mind that is filled with worldly concerns is naturally averse to such spiritual investigations is illustrated by the story of Janamejaya and Vaiṣampāyana.

Rishi Vaiṣampāyana proposed to King Janamejaya (the son of Parikshit) that he may hear the whole of the Mahābhārata story from one end to the other

King : "Sire, I have no leisure."

Rishi. "Canst thou not listen to one Chapter thereof?"

King. "Can't spare time for that even, Sire!"

Rishi. "What, hast thou no time to hear one Verse at least?"

King. "In that case, Sire, go on; I am willing."

The Rishi began:—

द्रुपिभौ पुरुषौ मूढौ दुर्योधनदशाननी ।

गोमयं वनमङ्गलं दृष्ट्वा पुनः पुनः ॥

"Duryodhana and Rāvaṇa,

Blockheads are these two men,

'Capture of kine'¹ and 'Ruin of grove'²

Seeing, to war again."

On hearing this, Janamejaya began to ask. "Holy Sire! what is "Capture of kine"?¹ what is "Ruin of grove"?² and so on, till to fully satisfy himself as to what the bearings of

¹ This has reference to the Capture of Virāt's kine by Duryodhana narrated in Mahā-bhā.

² This is with reference to the ravages committed by Hanumān in the Asoka Vane of Rāvaṇa (Rāmāyana. V.)

these passages were, he had to hear from Vaisampāyana, the whole of the Mahābhārata and Rāmāyaṇa.¹

[Bhag. Viṣṇ., Bk. I, p. 192. "Vidumna" I, 1-2]

TOPIC 10.

The forgetting God and re-collecting Him.

Naṣṭyār² said.—

"A merchant left his home for earning money, when his wife was pregnant. Much time passed before he returned. She gave birth to a son. He grew and traded and also left home for trading. It happened by accident, that both of them (but unknown to each other as father and son), simultaneously purchased goods and stored them under one shed. The shed was narrow to hold them all. A quarrel arose, and grew and grew so much so in warmth that the one wished to take the head of the other. A third person who knew both chanced to alight on the spot, and said.—'This is your father;' 'this is your son.' Immediately they ceased hostilities, and remorsefully repenting for what had happened joined their goods into one stock, having now but one interest, and the recognized relation of father and son restoring to the father the function of the protector, and to the son that of the protected."

Thus have we forgotten our kinship to God. As soon as that is recognized, we become His own, all our interests blend in His; the abyss is bridged that separates Him from us, by virtue of His Majesty and Sovereignty over the material and the spiritual Universes and by reason of our littleness and poverty of resources. The very thought of His Supreme

¹ Cp. how Maṇakkāḥ Nambī by reciting one verse from Gitā [गीता विद्या, &c., IX-2] to Āṣṭavardār he made him to read the whole and converted him. And also cp. how by the

recital of one verse, by Mahāpūrṇa, &c. 'avātāhāvika, &c. Rāmānjan's further inquiries were excited.

² Flourished 1064 A. C. [Fide Huzarrah Table.]

Immense Majesty doth cause a fear that our insignificance is of no account in His calculation, just as a bit of straw, drifting on the bosom of the vast ocean, is borne back to the shore, crested on a curling surf. But not so; as soon as we realise that He is our Rightful Ruler and Constituted Sovereign, having all as—and therefore ourselves included in—His possessions, we are also thus rightfully entitled and constitutedly fit to approach Him in love, without fear¹ of such vast distance existing between Him and us, as between the ocean and the straw².

[Bhag. Vish., Bk. I, pp: 213 214. "Adaṅgu" l. 2-7.]

TOPIC 11.

Fear of God how converted to Love of God.

Nañjiyar "A certain prince saw a garden but feared to enter it. But as soon as some one said,—'This garden belongs to thy father, the king,' all fear vanished, he entered, roamed and enjoyed there at pleasure. So doth our fear to approach the Almighty vanish as soon as we realise that we are His Children (or natural objects of His boundless love)".³

[Bhag. Vish., Bk. I, p. 214. "Adaṅgu" l. 2-7]

¹ Cp. 'The fear of God is wisdom's root';

The love of God its ripest fruit.'

Cp. Bhāgavata, vii. 9-26. 'Kṛ-āham, &c.'

² Cp. To know, to love and to serve God is what Vedānta teaches, according to Rāmakṛṣṇā. To love God is the first commandment of the Bible [vide Matt. xxii., 37, 38]. St. Francis-de Sales says—

"Ah! Theotime, it appears, if I may dare to say so that the heart of God is passionately enamoured of ours. Would it not have been a sufficient favour to permit us to love Him? No, such a permission was not sufficiently descriptive of

the tenderness and ardour of his Divine heart; an express commandment to love Him with all our strength was necessary; that neither the greatness of God nor the misery of man which usually removes us at such a distance from the Divinity, or any other pretext whatsoever should deter us from fulfilling a duty which he wished to render so imperative' (viz., to love Him above all) [pp. 66-67] A Treatise on the Love of God.]

³ Read: 'Śākhya, Parables', pp: 389-400, Max Muller's Six Systems of Indian Philosophy.

Cp. P. 154, Vol. IV., Siddhānta Dipikā, Śivajñāna Siddhīyār, by J. M. N.

TOPIC 12.

Nearing the Grave is a gain to Saints.

On a certain birth-day of Śrī Rāmānuja, the ascetic Kuṇṇattu Jīyar reverently approached His Holiness. Rāmānuja calling him by his dear name of Śingap-pirān, said—"Śingap-pirān dost thou know that this is my birthday?" Not understanding what Rāmānuja imported by this, Pirān remained silent. Rāmānuja broke the silence thus "As soon as we drop the body, salvation certain waits at our door, only the days that intervene stand as the obstacle. And therefore, is not crossing over one year of this obstacle jubilantly significant? Dost thou not think 'that this is something *gained*'?"

[Bhag. Vish., Bk. I, pp. 226-227 "Oduṅga," I, 2-9.]

TOPIC 12.

No cause for anxiety when true kinship with God is once recognised.

Embār once explained St. Nammāzhvār's passage "Thou hast but to number thy remaining days" (l. 2-9. Tiru-

1 Cp. (c) "The human personality is not lost with the body death is indeed an expansion of it, death is an epoch in which we become spirits of ampler range." [p. 703, Contemp. Review, for May 1900]

(b) 'God possessed, our own God, that is creation's Home, that our last End, there only is our rest. O that the winds of grace would blow that we might sail more swiftly over this broad sea to our eternal Home! Another day is gone, another week is passed, another year is told. Blessed be God then we are nearer to the end. It comes swiftly, yet it comes slowly too. Come it must, and then it will all be but a dream to look back upon' {Dr. F. W. Faber's Creator and Creature, p. 394, Ch. iv, Bk. iii}

(c) 'As for your soul, it is above the law of death' [P. 160 Revd. S. Rutherford's Select Letters]

(d) 'If death, which is before

you and we all, were any other thing but a friendly dissolution and a change, not a destruction of life, it would seem a hard voyage to go through such a sad and dark trance, so thorny a valley, as is the wagon of sin, but I am confident the way ye know though your foot never trod in that black shadow, the loss of life is gain to you.' {PP. 237 S, Ibid.}

(e) 'We die in the best state of dying, &c.' [P. 344, Creator and the Creature, by Faber]

(f) 'O, cruel time, that torments us and suspends our dearest enjoyments that we wait for, when we shall be bathed and steeped soul and body, down in the depths of this love of love! O time, I say, run fast! O motions, mend your pace' [P. 215, Revd. S. Rutherford's Select Letters.]

(g) Read W. Whitman's Death Carol.

vâi-mozh.) thus — ‘When the cause has ceased, has not the effect ceased? May not fruit be considered as having come to our hands? Is there any more cause for anxiety?’ (The cause here is sin or ignorance which has bound us to an inconstant detestable body, so that when sin has ceased, no more of embodied existence is in store. Sin has ceased as soon as we have realised our true relationship with God, viz., He as the Proprietor and we as His property.

[Bhag. Vish., Bk. I, p. 227. “Oduṅga,” l. 2.9.]

TOPIC 14.

**The Holy Eight-Syllabled Mantra,¹ a precious
Truth for the deserving.**

St. Nammâzhvar;—

“Seek ye, of Nîrâyāṇ, His Feet,
Of Graces ’yond compare, the Seat;
The Sum of countless souls,—unique;
To Him, in likeness, beatific.”

[*Tiruvâi-mozhi* l. 2.10 “Eṇ-perukku.”]

¹ This Mystery called the Ash-
tâkshari is contained in the Nârâ-
yaṇopaniṣad or Ashtâkshari-Upa-
niṣad. The nine divisions into
which it can be etymologically split
envey the nine kinds of relation
subsisting between God and soul:—
God the (1) Sire (A); as the (2)
Saviour (A); (3) that all souls exist
for Him (A), (4) Spouse (U), (5)
the conscious soul (M), (6) God,
owner, the soul His *chattei* (na mah)
(7) Son! in his body (aara); (8)
God as Seat or Prop; and (9) God
the Enjoyer (of souls and all) (ayana)

[Vide p. 9 on Hinduism or the
Vaidic Religion, by S. Pârthasarathi
Yogi.]

This is the Mantra, to learn
which, Râmânuga volunteered eight-
een-times at the door of His Guru
Tirukkôṭṭiyûr-Nambi who revealed

it to him under promise of secrecy,
but let what Râmânuga did then be
told in the reverent words of Annie
Besant — “It is told of Sri Râmâ-
nujâchârya that a Mantra was once
given him by his Guru, and he asked
what would happen if he told it to
another. “Thou wilt die,” was the
answer. “And what will happen
to the one who hears it?” “He will
be liberated.” Then out ran the
devotee of Sri Kṛishṇa, and flying
to the top of a tower, he shouted out
the Mantra to the crowded streets
below, careless what happened to
himself, so that others should be set
free from sin and sorrow. There is
the typical devotee, there the Lover
transformed into the likeness of the
Beloved.” [“The Value of Deva-
tion” Theos. Review, May 1900,
p. 272.] [Vide Note 91, p. 140, Yogi
Pârthasarathi’s Engl. Tatva-trayâ.]

Āzhvān, who was teaching his sons Bhartar and Śrīrāmappīlai, stopped short as soon as he came to this Stanza, and ordered them to go and learn its Holy Sense from their Pastor Embār; but as they were leaving, he called them back —

“Sons, stay! we do not know who may live and who may die the next moment. Life is so uncertain. Remain therefore and hear the secret of this verse from myself.” He instructed them the Holy Eight-Syllabled Mantra, and told them to consider the above Stanza as explanatory of this Holy Prayer [The first order “to go” implies the gravity of sense contained in the Prayer and worthy of being imparted by the constituted Guru; the countermand “to stay” implies that not a moment should be lost in learning the Science that will lead us to God.]

[Bhag : Vish. Bk. I. P. 228. “Eṇ-perukku”]

TOPIC 15.

God is near and easy. Only we have to understand Him.

Rāmānuja to Embār :—

St. Nammāzhvār has so far taught us that Great is God and therefore He is Worthy of Worship. But we may ask the saint :—“How is that possible, as if a lame individual were asked to mount an elephant?” To this, the saint would reply thus :—“Not so, if the elephant itself laid down, so as to allow the lame man to ride it, then God though great is accessible.” Think of the Avatāras (or Incarnations where God sacrifices Himself for man). Those who fail to recognize in it the Almighty, go the wrong way, but other fortunate men go into transports of joy at seeing the Almighty thus descending to man. Thou, Embār! belongest to the latter holy band. Charitable men dig tanks for example; one man drowns himself to death therein, whereas another allays his thirst therefrom. Avatāra is like the tank. A lamp is lighted. The winged ants (*viṭṭi*) rush into

it and die; at the same time, we do make use of the same light for various useful purposes. Avatāra is like the lamp. ('God is not away from us, He is *with* us always' is the import of this analogy)¹

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. I. Pp. 259—260. "Pattudai"].

TOPIC 18.

God's impatience to save souls.

Tiruk kurugai-ppirān Pillān (the writer of the 6000 Commentary on St. Nammāzhvār's Tiruvāi-Mozhu), used to say thus on the event of Lord Kṛṣṇa stealing butter —

1 (a) "What we say is secret is known to Him who made our interior nature. He who made us is present with us though we are alone."

[The 'Papyrus Prime' 2000 B. C.]

(b) The modern scientific religious spirit wants such a God, for says Rev. E. J. Fripp, B. A., of Dr. Martineau's *System of Philosophy*.—"But, rightly interpreted, a philosophy that teaches the divine in all souls, that reveals the authority for good in every heart and conscience and proclaims on a new and deep sense, the Father-hood of God to all men and women is the recognition of universal rights and sacred obligations, compared with which the rights and obligations of possession, blood, race, rank and education are altogether secondary. The religious future is with those who feel and utter this, and make great sacrifices for it."

But in order to do this, something farther is required. *We want a new conception of God the Father Himself.*

We have discovered that we are children of the Highest; but what is He? Not a benevolent Being who has put us here on probation and calls on us from the height of His superiority to overcome evil which baffles our thought, but a Being who is Himself at the heart of all this groaning world, of it and in it and agonising for it, a supreme and infinite Hero (like the Avatāra) who summons us to work and triumph with Him, and dying, as it were, with Him, to rise again perpetually to higher life. A God who does not Himself suffer, is not the God of this creation nor can He command the enthusiastic devotion of men. To make self-sacrifices we must worship Infinite Self-sacrifice." ["Theism and Pantheism" by Dr. A. Wells, p. 224, *Theos Review* for May 1900.]

(c) 'Thou wouldst not seek Me if thou didst already possess Me. Therefore do not be uneasy when I seem still far off. [P. 69. Pascal's *Thoughts*].

Cp. Bhāg. X. 32-30, "Nāham tu ankāyo Śr."

"He would not wait till the churning was over, but would impatiently thrust Himself between and lay His (tiny) fingers on the half-made (creamy) butter, like hungry men not waiting till food was fully cooked, but eating it up half-cooked and half-uncooked."¹

[Bhag: Vish. Vol. I. P. 274 "Pattudai."]

TOPIC 17.

The virtue of mediation.

Nañjiyar submitted this question to Bhattārya.—

"For salvation, is it not enough to resort directly to the Universal Lord; why should it be necessary to go to Him by mediation of the Mother?" To which Bhattārya replied:—In nature we know the protection the mother affords to a child when it is found guilty and the father is thereby angry. The mother knows exactly the opportunity when the father is in the proper mood to be appeased and made to forgive the child, and renew his natural love for him. Even so is the case with God in protecting His creatures. As Father, He is the Judge, as Mother

¹ The esoteric meaning of this butter-stealing event (on which the Christian missionaries delight to put such vicious construction) is that God incarnates among men, and is so solicitous of saving them that he takes their butter, even unawares. Butter is put into pots and hung up on hanging hoops of rope (*ekyam. Sāna*). This network symbolizes the body; butter is the soul, the act of stealing, the solicitude on the part of God to save the soul, or reclaim it, His own property. That (1) God desires to be offered the food of His aspirants; that (2) He is ever active in the function of salvation, are the two truths exem-

plified by the stealing act of the Holy Incarnation. [Read our Bhagavad Gītā with commentaries. IX-28, *Patram &c.*] In Bhāg. Pur. X, Butter (being the essence) is explained as *Brahma-Vidyā* or Theosophy. Verb: *srp*. Cp: "God desiring and man withholding, and then God getting, as it were, by stealth or by craft, less than a tithe of His due from less than a tithe of His creation, and then as it were spreading Himself out in a kind of joyous triumph at his success."

[Dr F. W. Faber, Ch. I. Bk. ii. Creator and Creature.]

Read: P: 23: "The Holy Lives of the Ashvins."

He is the Forgiver " [This is the Principle of vicarious redemption, and the Quality of mercy existing in God to overflowing.] ¹

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. I. P. 310 = ३१०]

1 Much may be written on the two-fold aspect of God here figuratively exemplified, the two-fold aspect of Fatherhood and Motherhood. This is the meaning of the holy formula: "Śrīman Nārāyaṇa." Read P. 6, Bhagavad Gī. (by Author), footnote 1. The Śaṅkalopaniṣad 6 begins with: "Mother (māta)" in Bk. Gī IX 17, Kṛṣṇa calls Himself "Mother." Among many expositions of this Universal Truth, the following is found on p. 1223, Vol. II, Chicago Parliament of Religions, by B. B. Nagarkar:—"The first ideal of the Brahman (Brahmā) is the ideal of the motherhood of God. * * * the world has yet to understand and realize as it never has in the past, the tender and loving relationship that exists between mankind and their Supreme Universal Divine Mother. O! What a world of thought and feeling is centered in that one monosyllabic word 'Mā' (mother). * * * Words cannot describe, hearts cannot conceive of the tender and self-sacrificing love of a human mother. Of all human relations that of mother to her children is the most sacred and elevating relation and yet our frail and feeble human mother is nothing in comparison with the Divine Mother of the entire humanity, who is the primal source of all love, all mercy and all purity."

Mother represents the principle of mediation or the Christ. In this

principle, are all the agents of God appointed by him for salvation, agents interceding between man and God. Says Fr. de Sales in His "Love of God" Preface, P. XXVIII:—"It is a vain delusion to imagine we have the Lord for our Father, unless we recognise the church as our mother." Read Vish. Par. for a vivid description of the Father and Mother principles blended in nature. Read pp. 1376 Chicago Parl. of Rel. Vol. II, Rāmāṇja Religion by S. Pārthasarathi Yogi:—"The Universal Mother, Lakṣmī, the Śakti or Personal Energy of Viṣṇu (the latter identified with Supreme Deity) is Lady and Goddess of the world, and the mediatrix between God and the Soul. She checks sin and stirs up Divine Mercy and Love for sinners. In her incarnation as Sītā, the bride of Rāma, she is especially to be venerated as our Lady of Grace and Mercy. She is the Beloved of the Lord incarnate in Rāma. She converts the soul by her mercy and the Lord by her beauty." St. Fr. de Sales says:—"Strength (Father) is tempered by sweetness (Mother) and sweetness is supported by strength. One stimulates, the other persuades." [P. 72, ch. XII Bk. II.] Vide Śrī-Sāktas with commentaries, by Max Muller, end of Vol. IV. Manjula X. Big Veda, pp. 2128; and also Lakṣmī-tantra of Pārthasarathi. The idea of motherhood is found in the First scrip-

TOPIC 18.

God as Love contrasted with God as Supreme etc.

As long as St. Nammāzhvār confined himself to discourse on Divinity in its aspect of the Exalted, the Worship-worthy, and the Approachable, to the exclusion of abhorrent earthly objects, which ordinarily absorb the attention of non-Godward man, a disciple approvingly listened to it, his approbation taking the form.—“The theme is one worthy of the acceptance of the world-weary, so long as it treats of the Almighty in His Sublime character; therefore I listen to it as a sensible man ought to.” But as soon as the Saint changed the Divine discourse into the form of *love* to God, and that love treated by analogies taken from the experiences of mankind in the world, and that love treated specially in its relation as Lover and the Beloved, or as Mistress and Spouse, as between soul and God, the disciple turned away from it thinking that this kind of treatment was a shock to good taste, outrage to his wisdom, and a violence to his commonsense. He forthwith left the place murmuring that the discourse had assumed the character of a sensualist's love-conversation. The holy author of the exposition of this *divine* love, viz., Nāṣṭiyār exclaimed.—“What an unfortunate man this, that he should have failed to realise in his heart the deep

tures as shown by Annie Besant in her “Zoroastrianism” (1897) (a) P 70-71] The wisdom, the primordial Wisdom, or Mind by which the world was made. This is Armaiti (sounding almost like Rāmā—a name of Lakshmi), of whom it is written to succour this life (to increase it) Armaiti came with wealth, the good and true mind; she, the everlasting one, created the material world” [Essays on the Pārsis by Dr Haug.] In later days Armaiti became identified with her creation, and was worship-

ped as the goddess of the Earth, but of yore she completed the Trinity (b) “These four favours first asked I thee, Ahura! Asha’ and grant thee thine, Armaiti!” [Dr. Mill’s Gāthās P 343.]

Also read ‘Simon Magus, P 67, by Wood; Kenneth Chamber’s Autobiography on Motherhood, and his dissertation on the Name Śrīnātha, Pārthasarathi Yogī’s Tattvāraṇya P 193. Śrī to us always resides in His bosom, like Christ the Son in His bosom. [John 1. 18.]

hidden sense of our altered discourse¹, that he should have failed to see in it the explanation of the mysterious *Divine Love* (Bhakti) contained in the commandment of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka-*Upanishad*, [Maitreyī Brāhmaṇa, 44. —“He is to be lovingly, intensely meditated on (Nidhidhyāsatavyah.)”²

[Bhag. Viśh. Bk. I, P. 326 “Añjirai.”]

¹ Cp. “Why then did they not believe? Because their will was too vitiated to relish the suavity of faith and therefore they remained incredulous. Their understanding felt the force of the arguments for believing, but their hearts were insensible to the motives from which that belief should spring, and it was on this account they refused to yield.” [Treatise on Love of God by St. Fr. de Sales, p. 83, Ch XIV Bk. II.]

² Cp. Big Veda “Toskī Jāremira primum IX. 32-8” —“God is to be loved even as the maids her secret lover.” (2) Bh. G. IX. 29 “Whoso worship Me in love, they are in Me and I am in them” (meaning that the union brought by love is no form.) (3) Bh. G. X. 9 “Mylovers’ thoughts are rivetted on Me, their life is centred in Me, their conversation is about Myself, full of mutual enlightenment and entertainment. By this they derive contentment and rapture” (freely paraphrased.) (4) Ch. Up. vii. 25 “God (atma), the Subject of (thy) instruction, is below, is above, is before, is behind, is up; He is all. Whoso seeketh thus, thinketh thus, willeth thus, loveth Him, recreateth in Him, waiteth (Nishthā) in Him, and is possessor of Divine Blessedness.” [“Āchāra

Ātmadeva, &c.”] Vide Bhāgavata:—“X. 12-2” Strīṣā vishṇōnāmiva etc. = “like lovers with their mistresses.”

Præter facit theologum, runs the Latin saying. True religion is more of the heart than of the head. To him whose heart has not expanded to divine love, the intellectual alone gives satisfaction (as in the typical case of the disciple running away from the Divine-love discourse). St. Augustine said —“*Quid rei credere in Deum? credendo amare, credendo diligere, credendo in eum ire et ejus membris incorporari*” meaning what is to believe in God? Believing is loving (with passionate warmth—the love of emotion—Bhakti-rāp-ājanna-jñāna); Believing is loving (with reasoned attachment—the love of reason); Believing is to pass into Him, to be incorporated with His members.” The God-love-literature of the Āchāryas or Indian Saints is superb and voluminous. Their emotional outbursts find but a feeble echo in the exclamations of the Western Saints. A few specimens of the latter, and of the relation in which God is spoken of as Spouse, will here suffice — Christ said (vid: Matt. xii. 37, Mark xii. 30, Luke x. 27) —“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with

all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy might." Rabbi Akiba (P. 308, Talmud) says on this —

"With all thy heart"—With thy propensities towards good and towards evil.

"With all thy soul"—Even though he should demand thy life.

"With all thy might"—All thy personal possessions

[Such a love is characterized as "Eku bhakti" vide Bh: Gt. vi-17].
Page 11. Excerpts from the "Letters of a Mystic of the Present Day"

Love, who by Thyself art binding
Every thought and wish of mine,
Love, which round my heart art
winding
Hidden cords of strength Divine;
Love, I yield myself to Thee
Thine for ever more to be."—

Norales.

Page. 60-61: I. We know Him as our Father; that in our Regeneration [Cp. Pitā: Sub Up.]

II. We know Him as our Spouse or Counterpart; that is the marriage of Re-generation (Hond the *Rahasya* called *Ātma-vivāha*.)

III. We know Him as the Universal Life (*Vishvān*) in its manifold operations and fruits (brought us, then we see and know Him in the Offspring of His love.

Page. 63:—'He is the One Husband to whom St. Paul, a true friend of the Bridegroom said he had espoused the Corinthians (2-Cor. xi-2). It is because we all have one Husband the Lord-Spirit, that there is unity in the multiplicity of the one Body. If we endeavour to form alliances with other spirits than the One Lord-Spirit, we shall only continue in incom-

pleteness and disunion. In that One Lord-Spirit we shall all find our complement, and He will renew us each in the spirit of our minds and make us each perfect in sympathy of perception, affection and action, with the Head and Members of the Whole Body."

Page 206-207. Can it really be called knowledge, I mean in the full sense of the word, if it be less than an intelligent and sympathetic fellowship with the Universal Spirit? Is it not an indefinite apprehension of something which is far off, rather than an intimate fellowship with Some One ever nigh? "The Lord" to me means the Universal, tender, sympathizing all-perfecting Mind. The one word which expresses what I understand it to mean is *Husband*, in its ideal sense of Guide, Sympathizer and Supporter; on whom every human heart in its weakness, sorrow and ignorance may lean, in sure and certain confidence of being made entirely One with the Wisdom, Love, and Power of the Most High in Whom "we live and move and have our Being."

From the *Perfect Way or the Finding of Christ* :—

Page 40 * * "God is Love". And Love is that which not merely creates and after brief caress repudiates and discards; but which sustains, releases, perfects and perpetuates."

Page 325. "O Soul of my Soul" would God I were one with Thee, even though it were in death!"

"Thou hast all of my love, my desire, and my sorrow:

Yea, my life is mingled with Thine, and is gone forth with Thee!

TOPIC 19.

God's Grace alone can crown personal effort.

Two devout men at Tiruk-kōthiyūr met at a bathing ghât. One of them Terk āzhvân said thus to Kōjari-Yāzhvân —
 "Think not, friend! that my sins will be washed by dipping in these waters once and twice. Unless the grace of God in the

Behold! Love is a ransom, and the tears thereof are prayers.

Here is Love's secret, and the mystery of the communion of saints.

Love redeemeth, Love lifteth up, Love enlightheth, Love advanceth Souls.

(Thomas à Kempis—Imitation of Christ: by John Payne, London, Nisbet & Co.: p. 217):—

Ch. XV. Bk III *Divine Illumination*—"Dearest Jesus, most beloved Spouse of my soul, supreme source of light and love, and sovereign Lord of universal nature! * * * when shall I lose, in the Love of Thee, all perception of myself, and have no sense of any being but Thine."

Ch. I. Bk II, p. 126 (*Id.*): "Oh, faithful soul! dispose thy heart for the reception of this Bridegroom."

St. Francis de Sales has written "A Treatise on the Love of God". Among many things, he says (Ch. IX. Book I p. 20-21):—"This great king (Solomon), in order to facilitate the contemplation of that spiritual love which is maintained by a faithful correspondence between our hearts and the inspirations of grace, represent the Divine Lover and his chosen Spouse under the figure of a faithful shepherd and chaste shepherdess, whose mutual

affection he describes.

The shepherdess first appears on the scene. Solomon, in a transport of love, puts these words into her mouth: *Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth.* Read the whole of Solomon's Song or the Canticle of Canticles" and Jayadeva's Gita-Govinda, translated by Edwin Arnold.

"The virgins would flock fast about the Bridegroom, they would embrace and take hold of Him and not let Him go." [P. 121; Rev. S. Rutherford's *Select Letters*.]

If the Christian Missionaries should still persist in misrepresenting Lord Kṛishṇa, the God of Love, here is one country-man of their own nation, Mr. E. E. Sterdy, saying thus in p. 31 of his *Nārada-Bhakti-Sūtra*:—

"The playing of Kṛishṇa with the shepherdesses as described in the Vishṇu-Purāṇa and elsewhere, perhaps no Hindu allegory has been so misperceived, it has been made by some few debased people of India, as similar allegories have in other countries an excuse for licentiousness under the cloak of religion. It has been used by the ignorant, by missionaries and others, as a weapon of hostile criticism against Hindu religious. We may safely assert that none of these have read the

shape of the discus in His hand descend and destroy it, no personal exertion (without grace) is of the least efficacy "

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. I, P. 344. L. 42 "En-seyyâ."]

TOPIC 20.

What doth absence of God signify

St. Nammâzhvâr thus sang (144 Ti-vây Mozhi).—

"Ye Chakravâkâ¹ birds¹ of sapphire hue,
Tell Him the tidings of my flame, will you?
How He, aware that I must cease to live
Can still depart from me? Doth He believe
When He hath proved to me the joys of love
In union with His cloud-like² body above,—

original but merely sought some means to destroy people's religion in order to advocate their own. Time might be better employed in pointing out the original intention of the allegory (Fide "Avatâra by Annie Besant") by which they would elevate both themselves and the people with whom they come in contact * * * Love is one, whether it be called that of Christ, Kṛishṇa or any other individualized expression of Truth

Madame Guyon's Lyrics—

"Love is our only business here,
Love simple, constant and sincere."

* * * * *

(The Lives of Lord Gaurāṅga and of Paramahansa Rāmakṛishṇa Deva may be read.)

"My spouse! in whose presence
I live,
Sole object of all my desires,
Who knows't what a flame I conceive
And cannot easily double its fires!"

* * * * *
"Never strife shall more betide
Twixt the bridegroom and the
bride"

* * * * *
"Cherish a bride who cannot rove,
Nor quit thee for a meaner love."
Also read p: 126 "The Psychology of the Saints."—"Now it can join with St. Francis of Assisi &c."

1. Called "Makhautil" in Tamil. A sort of colored goose, also called the Brāhmaṇy duck, the Anas Cassara

2. The soft azure which the church has selected as the emblem of celestial purity, that of the canopy above" [P: 15. "The Voice of Creation" by F. C. Oakeley, M.A.]

A lapidary, when his sight becomes fatigued, turns his eyes on a bright emerald, and which by its grateful hue, is soon enabled to resume his labours." [St. Fr. de Sales] Lord Kṛishṇa is represented in colors of the azure and of emerald."

TOPIC 21.

All things are full of God; they can all tell us of God.

A doubt arose as to how Saints, drunk in love of God, could address lifeless flowers and senseless birds to carry messages to God? In verse 1-4-5 for example, St. Nammâzhvâr, begs of a heron (Tam *karuku*,) to take compassion on him &c. Reply The beloved may be even like Sîtâ—the blessed dame of the Janak-race—and yet, in affairs of love to God, even stocks and stones may serve as messengers. On one occasion, Bhattar was informed of the death of Nambiyeru-tiṅu-vudaiyân Dâsar (a low caste bhakta) in such language as —“He breathed away to the other world”. Bhattârya chided them and said —Ye should have said thus: “He bid farewell here to go and join the service of the celestial hosts.” When good men go to God, caste is of no account. So when messengers are for God, they may be even stones and plants and birds.

[Bhag. Vish. Bk I. P. 371. 1. 4-5. ' Nalki ttân.]

TOPIC 22.

The sweet agony of separation from God.

Thus sang St. Nammâzhvâr (1. 4-8. Ti Vây Mozhu):—

“Though thee I bid, my young Pūvai,¹

Go, tell my woe to that Mātai,²

¹ Cp. (1) “Ye tempests, spare the slumbers of your Lord
Ye zephyrs, all your whisper'd sweets afford” —
[Madame Guyon.]

(2) “Ye linnets, let us try, beneath this grove,
Which shall be loudest in our Maker's praise.” — [Ibid.]

(3) “O sweet Kāsanika say, has she
Who loved thy bloom been seen by thee?
If thou have seen her face most fair.

Say, gentle tree, I pray thee where?”

[Nāma's Lament Rāmāyaṇa III-61]
(4) [See Bhāgavata Purāna. X
Gopī's Lamenta.]

² A bird.

³ ‘Māl’ is a Tamil name for Viṣṇu meaning ‘He who attracts souls by His Beauty’ Or He who makes Himself ‘insensible to re-duplicated wrongs, and to set one attribute against another’ [Vide p. 148. Dr. Faber's Creator and Creature.]

Who dwelleth far; yet stayest thou?
 Well, my hue, grace, life, depart, know
 Hie hence and seek him who, thy bill
 With tiny bits of food may fill "

Periya Tirumalai Namb¹, on his death approaching, bid the drapery that hung across his holy place of worship, be drawn aside, and addressing his Deity—the Lord Krishna, who as child daily ate of butter offered by him—exclaimed in the Saint's words :—

" Then, my hue, grace, life, depart, know,
 Hie hence and seek him who, thy bill
 With tiny bits of food may fill."

[Bhag Vish Bk. I. P. 386. l. 4-8 " Nī yalāye."]

TOPIC 23.

Rāma and Krishna—a humorous comparison.

" Rāma once in his boyhood sported with his bow, and out of a boyish prank made Mandarā a hump-back " So, a story goes. " Such mischievous gambols can form no part of the programme in God's incarnation as Rāma ; all such mischief is designed for His incarnation as Krishna ; so this must be foisted on Krishna's head ! " some one said. To this, it was retorted ; " Yes, Krishna is thy butt for every frolic, just as the saying : " all sin is on the Śramaṇa's head. " " There was a wiseacre

¹ One of the five Gurus of Rāmāṇa.

² There is said to be in North India a Rāmāyaṇa (40,000 verses) composed by Bhagunda Rūhi, portraying in detail the boy-sports of

Śrī Rāma.

³ Cp. the Kannada saying —

" Anēntakke Śaṇeṣvara guru. " Śaṇeṣvara is a Jain who is low in the opinion of all Theists.

king to whom a complaint went. The complaint rose from the circumstance of a thief burgling into a Brāhman's house, and the wall, as it was wet, settling on him and killing him. The thief's friends demanded of the Brāhman, compensation. Both parties appealed to the king for justice.

The King. "Brāhman! the thief died because of your wet wall. Pay compensation."

Brāhman: "I do not know, Sire, ask the labourer who built the wall."

The King sent for the laborer and said —"You laid the wet wall. You ought to pay."

Labourer "No Sire! the waterman poured too much water."

Waterman. "No Sire! the pot-maker made the pot big."

Potter "No Sire! while making the pot, a dancing-girl passed my way, and as my furtive glances were with her gaily engaged, my pot became big."

Dancing-girl: "No Sire, I went that way, because the washerman had failed to bring my clothes soon."

Washerman:—"No Sire! when I went to wash, I had to wait, as a Śamana was washing on the stone." The Śamana (or ascetics belonging to the Jaina religion who keep the vow of silence) was in his turn now brought before the king

King.—"It is all thy fault Śamana! pay for it", and when on account of his vow the poor Samana did not open his lips, said.—"Ah! silence is consent, he is the real culprit, hang him."

It is thus, laying every fault at poor Kṛiṣṇa's door "

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. I. p. 425 "Māne-nōkḷi."—I-5-5.]

TOPIC 24.

God—The Ever-appetizing Nectar.

St. Nammāzhvār called the Deity by the epithet of "The ever-appetizing Ambrosia." "On this, Nambī Tiruvazhudinādu Dāsar said "While there was this sweet Ambrosia,—God Himself,—standing by their side, it is to me great surprise that those Deva beings—Were they of bovine fabric?—should have complacently (i. e., without shame) watched the ocean-churning with a view to its bringing forth but that salt water, the so-called

I Oh' Christian missionaries, you who heap contumely on Sri Kṛiṣṇa's character read this "Let me take one instance (the stealing of Gopis' garments by Kṛiṣṇa) which ignorant I'm have used most in order to insult to try to defame the majesty that they do not understand. But let me say this that I believe that in most cases where these bitter (accusals are uttered, they are uttered by people who have never really read the story, and who have heard only bits of it and have supplied the rest out of their own imaginations." * But the lesson is this that when the soul is approaching the anjyama Lord at one great stage of initiation, it has to pass through a great ordeal, stripped of everything on which it has hitherto relied, stripped of everything that is not of its inner Self, deprived of all external aid, of all external protection, of all external covering the soul itself in its own inherent life must stand naked and alone with nothing to rely on, save the life of the Self within it. [pp: 102, 103, 104,

Avatāra by A. Bennett].

"I have seen Sri Kṛiṣṇa contrasted with Jesus of Nazareth to the detriment of Kṛiṣṇa, and a contrast is drawn between the purity of the one and the impurity of the other, the proof given was that the husbands were left while the wives went to play with and wait on the Lord. But I have read words that came from the lips of Jesus of Nazareth "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me (Matt x 37, (also Matt x x 29, and Luke xiv 26) * * * Why is that right when done for Jesus which is wrong when done for Sri Kṛiṣṇa?" [pp 103-107 Avatāra by Annie Bennett.]

It may here be noted that modern writers like Messrs. Dupuis and Volzay are arguing in their works that the history of the life and miracles of Christ are borrowed from those of Lord Kṛiṣṇa.

Ambrosia (Amrita)?"

[Bhag. Vish. Bk 1 p. 471, "Amudam" 1-6-6.]

TOPIC 26.

Nothing on God's side admits divorce.

St. Nammāzhvār said: "By what possible pretext that I can find, can I part with God? On the score of vestiges of ignorance still remaining in me? (but he has removed all!). On the score that He has removed all trace of my ignorance, but yet He elects to remain aloof? (but He is with me!) Or on the score that He doth not heap on me blessing upon blessing? (but He is pouring torrents of them!). On the score that He expects me to return gratitude for gratitude? (but He is in no need of such, being full!) On the score He is not beautiful? (but He attracts me like the magnet?) On the score that He is not great enough? (but He is Almighty, Exalted!). On the score that by my self-exertion I have obtained Him? (but His grace alone has compassed this end for me!)." In what manner then is it possible to stigmatize the stainless Lord, in order to find an excuse for divorce? Only this that on his innocence it is possible for us to throw the dirt of our own sin, in the manner of the following anecdote —

"A Brāhman son-in-law, a boy, went to his father in law's place. The latter being poor asked the boy's help to work a water-lift, and working it together for a long time, the boy became tired, and he thought of incensing the father-in-law by spitting upon him. He spat, but "How cool!" exclaimed the elder, not minding the insult, and went on working the lift. Thereupon the boy left work saying — "Then get some one else who will spit on thee cool!" If we wish to throw odium on the innocent Lord, we can only do it with some of our own sin-contrived dodge like this boy.

TOPIC 26.

God is bent on saving us.

Though we protest against being saved, God protests to save us at all hazards, as illustrated by Rāma vowing thus at the sea side:—

“Triumphant to the southern shore,
Or Ocean's self shall be no more.”

[*Ramayana*, vi. 21-8.]

Here is a good story to illustrate this Truth —“There was a Brahman, who was an abject miser, another was on his way to this man's house to get a breakfast. People on the way said to him.—“He is a most sordid wretch. He won't give you food.” He said.—“Watch! before you all, in that very man's house I will have my food.” He got to the miser, and showing his great need, begged him for a little food so that he may live. “I can't do it” he said. But “I can't leave you”, the beggar continued. In order to escape the worry, “where is thy leaf (plate) then,” asked the miser. “Here it is,” the beggar opened his garment and showed it. Then the miser grumblingly said —“He who intends cutting the throat certainly brings the sword with him,” and could not help giving the provoking beggar a little rice and sauce to get rid of him.

Like this determined man of neediness is God who comes to save us, and we are like the miser resisting Him.

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. I. p. 310, “Yān-ōtti” I. 7 7.]

1 “In every part of the Scriptures we meet proofs of the liberality and goodness of God in the more than sufficient helps He grants sinners for enabling them to love Him. Consider this God of charity standing at the door of the human heart, he is not satisfied with knocking once only, he continues to strike and speak to the soul, which refuses him entrance. *As it is, make haste, my love* (Canticus ii-10.) He

is not discouraged by a first refusal; he puts his hand to the key-hole (Canticus V-3), and endeavours to open the door. He speaks aloud in the streets and public places; and in inviting the sinner to be converted, he uses reiterated entreaties, which never appear to him sufficiently eloquent.” [Treatise on Love of God p. 67, Ch. V (II Bk. II by Fr de Sales.)]

TOPIC 27.

Faith and Love, the basis of certitude.

Where love to God is wanting, there doubt, ignorance and bewilderment prevail. Where love is strong there certitude is sure. In illustration of this the following incident is related.—

Bhattar was conducting his lecture-meetings, which a learned Pandit used to attend. Bhattar treated him with scant courtesy. A holy Śrivaishṇava also used to frequent the assembly, whom, on the other hand, Bhattar received with great respect. A third party who was a witness of this difference in treatment once reverently approached Bhattar and entreatingly asked :—"What, Sire' is the meaning of your indifference to the learned Pandit, and your particular attention to the other ordinary good man? Pray solve me this puzzle." "Then, come to-morrow as usual," said Bhattar, "and watch. They also come as usual. And I will tell thee what." The morning came, the meeting began, and the Pandit first came and saluted. Bhattar received him with ordinary politeness, and asked : "Whom have you settled to yourself as the Ultimate Truth?" He replied :—"Some authorities speak of Brahmā (the Demurge—the son—the appointed agent for creation) as the Ultimate Truth; some speak of Viṣṇu (the All-pervader—the Father) as the Ultimate Truth, some speak of Rudra (the grandson—the appointed agent for destruction) as the Ultimate Truth. How is it possible for us to arrive at any conclusion?" So went he on saying. Then the holy man entered and saluted. Bhattar received him with great reverence and asked : "Pray who to you is Ultimate Truth?" He said "I know of no other than whom you daily dis-

course about—Nārāyaṇa, the Lord of Śrī."¹ Bhattar again :—

"Pray, what other Truth is amiable to your thinking?" He replied :—"I know of no other Truth than what you are accustomed to preach to us daily viz., that the Means as well as the End of my salvation is no other than Rāmānuja." "Excuse me for questions," Bhattar said, "and begged the holy Śrīvaiṣṇava to return home. Then turning to the third party who had questioned Bhattar, he said :—"Dost thou mark the difference between the two? Now say, to whom I should bend, this or that? Dost thou now perceive the nature of truth?" The questioner expressed himself satisfied.

[Bhag. Viśh. Bk. I., page 571; "Māyan" I. 9-6]

TOPIC 22.

God's Grace is free.

St. Nammāzhvār said :—"What more do we need (for salvation)?" By this he meant that God's grace is our sole means of salvation, and nothing is needed on our part. "Is Grace then gratuitous? has it no conditions or preparations? Did not for example Rāma implore the ocean's favour by previous preparations such as facing the East &c.²? And therefore, like seeking God by various means of self-effort, does not the means of resorting to Him alone for salvation—or resignation (*prapatti*)

¹ See note 1, p. 6. Bhag. Gītā by the Author. Also p. 213, *Taiva-troya* by S. Pārthasarathi Yogīśvar; *Vidyā*, i. e., Sophia or Wisdom; *Vāṇī*, i. e., Logos or the Word." Also see note 1, p. 20. [or "Śrī (h), i. e., Sandhyā or Recor-Topic 17: The virtue of Mediation.]

2. [Read Rāmāyaṇa VI-21-1].

"Then sacred grass did Rāma spread,
At ocean's shore, to lay his head,
Then to th' east he turned his face,
In reverence palms brought face to face"

or reliance on God alone, and ceasing of self-effort—also demand some conditions?", asked Vēlvetti Nambiyâr, of Nambijai. Nambijai replied.—"But behold! he who suggested to Râma the expediency of petitioning to the ocean, viz, Vibhîshana, did not himself, when he came to Râma as his Refuge, bathe in the ocean as a previous preparation. What do we infer from this? It was meet for Râma to adopt preliminary observances, becoming the race of Ikshvâku in which he was born; whereas the circumstance of birth, as one of the Bâkshasa race, did not warrant any previous ceremony. The purport is that each one is to do what is proper to his station. Surrender to God therefore doth prescribe neither infringement of law when one by caste &c. is bound thereto, nor observance of law when one by caste &c. is not thereto bound. [Each man is proper in his place, each man to do the duties proper to his station. Thus no special conditions support God's grace, which operates unasked and unaided¹] What is wanted is non-resistance or non rejection when Grace is offered.

[Bhag: Vish: Bk. I. p. 597: "Kaṇṇu]e " I.10.2.]

TOPIC 29

God's grip of His elect.

St. Nammâzhvâr found his heart had overtaken him in its flight to God to enjoy with him the bliss of union. All of a sudden our Saint recollected how mean and insignificant a

1. Here is a good illustration taken from St. Fr de Sales:—"God rouses us from sleep, consequently, we find ourselves awake, without having previously reflected on the circumstance." [P. 78. Ch. xii.

Bk. ii. on Love of God.]

The Indian illustration is what is called the "mārjāla-kṣora-nyāya" or "the method of the cat carrying its kitten in her teeth."

creature he was and how exalted and infinitely noble the Lord was, so that the very contact between an object, vile and abject like himself, and an object so pure and transcendent like God, seemed to him unworthy and unbecoming. Hence he thought it imperative on his part to flee from His embrace so that His purity may not get tainted by his own impure self,—flee and hide himself in some out of the way place where it would be impossible for his mind to have any thought of Him and where his tongue would no more attempt to speak of Him. But what happens? In the very place behind a ruined wall where he would hide himself away from God and where he would further cast a veil over his head to render himself more perfectly solitary and secure, so that no one could possibly encroach on his privacy and somehow manage to pronounce His Holy name, it so happened that a way farer 'most suddenly turned up, and disburdening a load which weighed heavily on his head, cried 'Sṛīman-Nārāyaṇa'. This sudden ejaculation all unawares, striking our Saint's ears, upset all his prior resolutions to forget God; and he found himself agreeably surprized, despite his determination, into recollections of the Lord and all that concerned Him. His heart swelling with devotion, he burst out in a pean of praise thus:—

செவ்வ நாரணனென்ற செங்கேட்டனும்,
மல்கும் கணபனி கடுவன் நாயகமே;
அல்லு கணபகனு மிடைவிடின்றி,
கவகி பென்றி விடான் கம்பி கம்பியே.

" 'Blissful Lord', heard I, anon my eyes in floods did run,

'Oh What is this?' I asked. What marvel this? the Perfect one,

Through friendly days and nights, elects with me to e'er remain,

To union wooing me, his own to make ; nor let me 'loane.'"

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. I. p : 613. Śalva. i-10-8].

TOPIC 30.

God-the Guru in the heart.

In the lecture-assembly of Embâr, the subject of who is the first Spiritual Preceptor for the soul came to be discussed. "The Guru imparts to us the Scriptures," some said. Others opined. "The first is that godly man who helps to take us to the spiritual Preceptor for acceptance." "Not so," said Embâr, "the First Preceptor is that Universal Lord who is seated in our hearts, and who unseen, gives us the impulse *not to resist*, but *to yield* to the proposals for good services offered by the visible Preceptors or Helpers."

[Bhag : Vish : Bk. II, p. 720-1. "Ottâr" II-3-2]

TOPIC 31.

The victory of Faith.

There lived a saint by name Puṇḍarîka. He took it into his head to present a flower-garland to God by personally

1. Cf. Saint Tondar-aḷppodi
Āṅṅvār's (=Bhaktāṅghri-Begū)
verse 34 of Tirumālai.

உணர்ந்தே யுணர்வுரைநீ உணர்வு
நடைநடைநடை, உணர்ந்தே வந்து
தொண்டியத் தொண்டியே கோமரு
கூடு, உணர்வுநடைநடைநடை நடை
குத்திநடைநடை, தொண்டியே நடை
நடைநடை நடைநடைநடைநடை நடவ.

'Supreme ! not gifted with the ken
of those,
That feel Thee in their heart o'
hearts, e'en I,

Assuming slave of Thine, a charla-
tan,

In all the glory of thy Bhaktas,
chad—

But 'tis the outerman, the cheat in-
side

Admidst their conclave, aye, that
nods its 'Yea'.

Oh, seeming shame ! which brings
beyond limits,

And makes me outright laugh my
'quiblo self !'

going to Him as he rests in the Milky Ocean (*Kshirabdhī*)¹. To reach this distant land, he went to the sea-shore (near Madras, Tiruk-kadal-mallai) and began to empty the ocean with his hands. To sound the depth of his faith, God put on the guise of a Śrī-Vaishṇava and approaching him asked.—Why hast thou undertaken this task? Pundarīka explained to him his intention.

God: "Brother! is it possible for thee to empty the ocean, and go to the Lord of the Milky Ocean and present him the garland.

Pundarīka. "If thou canst be of any good to me, help me in my design. Else go thy way."

God. "In that case, may I work with thee in thy labour?"

Pund. "If thou wilt do that, 'tis well and good." They both toiled together for a while in earnest; when, the ocean seemed drying up a bit. This made Pundarīka's heart leap with joy, when the disguised God said. "Brother, I feel tired; canst thou fetch me some food and drinking water? I shall take them and rest a while, after which let us commence our operations, refreshed. Pundarīka departed accordingly and brought food, but to his agreeable surprise, he saw the work

1. Among others, Head Viśṇu Purāṇa I-3-24—and *Ibid* V 1-32:—'Tūlāgachchata' &c. Also see Harivamśa, 3rd Part and Text 'Up Nārāyaṇam "Amḍhacya pāre"' &c. Kshirabdhī, and Nārāyaṇa brooding over the waters, and resting there ready to incarnate at all times of necessity, are primordial accounts which are re-echoed in such passages of the Christians as: "the spirit of God moved over the

waters" [*Genesis* 1-2], and: "And the eternal spirit, dwelling in a state of complete inaction and of supreme beatitude, awoke and detached itself for an indefinite period from the eternal Being &c." [*IV 2-f* The unknown life of Christ by Notovitch p. 148]. Those who hunt for esoteric may read *Awakened India*, "Śaśha-mayanam," Vol I p. 56, and *Indo-Aryan Mythology*, by Kāśyapa Iyengar

finished, and his own coveted Lord of Kṣhīrâbhdhi resting in all his glory and grandeur on His couch, Sesha, and wearing in all splendour the very garland His great devotee Puṇḍarīka had intended to offer him !:

[Bhag. Viṣṇ; Bk, II P. 835, "Kūṇḍal" u. 5. 11]

TOPIC 32.

God's all-absorbing love.

God is Love; for when He deigns, out of love, to commune with the saints, He becomes so absorbed in it as to forget for the time being everything else. St. Nammâzhvâr exclaimed.—"In union with me He doth not cast His eyes in any other direction." [Xl. Ti vâṃ-mozhi II.6-2. "Ṣikkēna"] In connection with this, an incident is related in the life of

1 Cf "Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you." [Matt. VII-7] "And Jesus answering said to them: Amen I say to you, if you shall have faith, and stagger not, not only this of the fig-tree shall you do, but also if you shall say to this mountain, Take up and cast thyself into the sea, it shall be done. [Ibid-XXI-51] "And all things whatsoever you shall ask in prayer believing, you shall receive." [Ibid-XXI-22] "And Jesus said to the centurion Go, and as thou hast believed, so be it done to thee. And the servant was healed at the same hour. [Ibid VII-13] "And

behold a woman who was troubled with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him and touched the hem of his garment." "For she said within herself If I shall only touch his garment, I shall be healed." "But Jesus turning and seeing her, said Be of good heart, daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour." [Matt IX-20, 21, 22] And the Lord said "If you had faith like to a grain of mustard seed, you might say to this mulberry tree: Be thou rooted up, and be thou transplanted into the sea and it would obey you" [Luke XVII 6]

Ālavandār.¹ Rāma-miṣṭra² had told Ālavandār that Appan³ had a (Yoga-) secret with him to communicate. In pursuance of this information, Ālavandār journeyed up to Gangaikonda-chōḷa-puram⁴ to meet Appan. He found him deeply absorbed in Yoga near a short screen-wall. Not wishing to disturb him, he stood outside the wall waiting. But immediately Appan turned round and asked if it was not somebody there who belonged to the Ṣottai⁵ pedigree? Ālavandār humbly ap-
proaching, introduced himself as such a person, and begged of Appan to tell him how he came to know of this fact though he (Ālavandār) had concealed himself behind the wall? Appan replied —Because Him, who when enjoying with me would not allow Himself to be allured by the sweet blandishments and soft caresses⁶ of even his eternally love-locked Spouse—the Universal Mother—, I now felt pressing on my neck, and turning round towards thy side three or four times. I thence inferred that to draw His attention this-wise, there must have been some one of the Ṣottai⁶ family come.”

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. II. P. 849. “Ṣikkēna” II-6-2.]

TOPIC 33.

The magnetic influence of God's saving power of love, radiating through His saints.

The stream of the love of god to His saints is said

1 Or Yāmuna-muni or Yāmuna-chārya (916. A. C.) the grandson of Nātha-muni [vide pp. 184-185, *Tetra-traya*, by S. Pārthasarathi Iyengar.]

2. Or Menakkāḷ-Nambi (870. A. C.) Disciple of Nātha-muni [Ibid.]

3. Kurugai-kāval-Appan, the

Disciple of Nātha-muni. [Ibid.]

4. The place where the Holy grave of Nātha-muni is.

5. The family name of Nātha-muni.

6. Lit. “Even if her fair arms did bind Him to her breast.”

to be so copious as to overflow the banks of their own individual limits and extend to all those who are devoted to the saints. Knowing this fact, the saints felt quickened to go forth unbidden and do evangelical service. They went among the worldlings with intent to form some connection or other with them so that a cause may thereby be created for God to save them. [This is the great secret of vicarious redemption, and also the mystery of the Incarnations. It is like one magnet transmuting by mere touch several iron filaments into its own virtue.] It is related of Sage Pillai Lokāchārya that when he heard that his beloved Deity permitted Himself to be robbed near a village Āyakkudi, he also permitted himself to be robbed of his all. The Deity was delighted at this signal proof of his attachment, and promised salvation to all who were connected with him. Lokāchārya's benevolence so expanded with charity at the gift so obtained, that in order to secure salvation, he touched the ants and cast his gazes on the trees and so on, this act conforming with the text:—

“Though trees and rocks they be,
A touch of hand, a look from eyes
Suffice to save would be;

What wonder! saved are ‘men with ties’.”

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. II. P. 929. “Ānavadu” II-8-1]

I. The original is thus:—

ययंसृशतिपाणिम्बां ययंपश्यतिचक्षुषा ।

स्थावराप्यपिमुख्यन्ते किंपुनरान्धवाजनाः ॥

Also Cf. Harivamśa 206—44-45.—

सृजेदोपपरंलोकं संहरेदपिविषया ।

तेजोभूर्तेरिवाचेद्वं इहलोकंचसंसृजेत् ॥

तिर्यग्योनीगतानांच कर्मभिनिरयोपमैः ।

तानपिप्रतिमुख्येत ब्रह्मसृक्तैश्चेतसा ॥

TOPIC 21.

The Hand of Wisdom stretched forth to save.

"Lend me the hand of wisdom," cried St. Nammāzhvār. The following conversation is recorded on this figurative phrase. Mudaliyāṇḍān and Embār were colleagues and disciples of Rāmānuja. Once on an occasion Āṇḍān was absent at Tīrū-nārāyaṇapura, whilst Embār remained in Śrīraṅgam. A disciple of Āṇḍān stayed with Embār some days. Embār, on one occasion, asked the disciple if he had already secured his spiritual relationship with any pastor.

Disciple :—"The relationship with you is my relationship." Embār administered to him the five-fold¹ sacraments enjoined for a Vaishṇava, and took him into his service. Thus did time go by, when Āṇḍān returned to Śrīraṅgam. On learning this, the disciple returned to his old master, whom he served as before. Embār, on coming to know this fact, hurried to Āṇḍān and said :—

"I have committed a great offence (to you)."

Quoth Āṇḍān :—"Not at all, if *two* men stretch their hands to a man fallen in a well, it is so much the more easy both for the riser and the raisers. So is the doubled spiritual hand of knowledge, the disciple has received from me and you both." "

[Bhag: Vish. Bk. II p. 986, "Idē" II-9-2].

- (1) The five sacraments are

तापःपुण्ड्रस्तथानाम मंत्रोवागश्चपंचमः ।

अग्नीपरमत्संस्काराः पारमेश्वरहरेतनः ॥

- (2) Cf. Vedāntasūtrīya's eulogium on Rāmānuja :

"Kudṛiṇṭi-kubhāṇṭi-mēṭṭe-nipōṭṭaṭaṭa Parabrahmaṇṭaṭi Kara-grahe-vicakṣhaṭa-jayam Lakṣmaṇaṭoyam moṭiṭi "

(Hail to Saint Rāmānuja, expert in holding out his hand to God, tumbled into the pit of the human)."

TOPIC 36.

The conduct of the God-Ward and the worldling compared.

Nāṁjīyar used to relate.—I was used to follow Pillai-tirunārayār Arayyar and Bhattar (my spiritual elders) when they went on a visit to the temples. I observed them leisurely pacing about the premises, eagerly taking note of all the features thereof, viz., of the holy turrets, the blessed mansions and so on, as if they drank them in with their eyes. But there were others who (unmindful to every surrounding beauty) ran on with race-horse speed¹. [This is to show that the Temple of God is our real Home where we must stay and serve for ever. To the worldling it is a place to hurry away from]

[Bhag. Vish. Bh. II, p. 1035—6. "Valam" II 10 S]

TOPIC 36.

Our incapacity to enjoy the Omnipresent God.

Sri-rāma-ppillai¹ (the younger brother of Parāśara Bhattar) asked of Bhattar this question when he was in Tiru-kkōttiyūr—"I find that St. Nammāzhvār, so far, is not distressed (1) because he longed for the happiness of Heaven, and he could not obtain it by reason of its existence in far-off regions of space²; and (2) is not distressed because he longed to enjoy God in his Incarnations,³ and he was debarred from doing so as his nativity was subsequent to those events; but his distress is now seen to arise after God was pleased to appear to him in His Worshippable modes (*archi*) manifest in all the Holy Places [on this earth], and after too specially manifesting Himself to

1. Called also Vyāmbhastar. Both sons of Śrīrātsāṅka-miṭra (Rāmaṇja's chief disciple).

2. Called the *Manifestation Supreme* (vide, P 130. *Tatva-Traya*, by Yogi S. Pārthanārāyaṇa Aiyangār).

3. Called the *Manifestation Distinctive* (*Ibid*).

The other Manifestations are :—the *Operating*, the *Persuasive*, and the *Worshippable* (*Ibid*).

him in His Holy Adytum, the Hill of Tīrumāṭirūṇjolaṭ (near Madhura, South India) , and I should after this have expected that the Saint would have gone on more and more revelling ¹ in the bliss of union with God here. Whence then doth his anguish come ?².

Quoth Bhattar :—" God is one, and therefore He is present everywhere. His solidarity is not affected whether the manifestation be *Supreme* (Para), *Operative* (Vyūha), *Distinctive* (Vibhava) or *Worshippable* (Archa). If any differences among them are perceived, they are due more to the corrupt understanding of the perceiver, than of God who is Omnipresent.³ God is Immense and Infinite. By going to the sea-side, we see of the sea only as much of it as our eye apprehends. Hence the saint could not say he became satiate when he was given the Divine Beatific Vision with all its attributes of transcendent Beauty &c., through the medium of Azhagar.⁴ Because God is endless, the saint could not with his limited capacity reach the end of it. It is like a man dying with thirst . fresh fragrant water is near, but (like Tantalus) he cannot drink as his mouth is sealed up.⁵ In this manner, God is near, and God is limitless , on the other hand, the saint's craving is great but he cannot limit the Limitless. The Saint realizes this difficulty and his agony thus is consequent on the small range of the powers of his senses and of his mind

[Bhag . Vish. Bk. III. p. 1096 ; " Munnir, " III—2].

- 1 Cf. (a) " But bliss resembling that of saints above,
Sprung from the vision of Almighty Love ;
Firm, solid bliss ; for ever great and new ;
The more 'tis known, the more admired as true "

(b) Bh. GI : " Yam labdhvā &c."

(c) Bhāg : Pur XII-12-51 "Tadeva."

2. "The kingdom of heaven is first in the Holy Hill mentioned within you." [Lake XVII-31]. *supra*.

3. The epithet of God muni-

4. Lock-jaw or some such cause.

TOPIC 37

The insatiable thirst of saints for God, or love to God insatiable.

It is related of Jiyar-nāyanār [the grandson of Maṇavā]s-māmunigaḷ] that he once came from Āzhvār-Tirunagari¹ to Śṛīraṅgam on a holy mission with respect to Āzhvār. Here he was seized with the malady known as "sun-set and sun-rise," as between sun-set and sun-rise was all night-time during which was interrupted the otherwise continuous performance of Divine services to Śrī Rāṅganātha * (God-Resident of Śṛīraṅgam). Nāyanār's avidity for enjoying God was so great as not to permit of delay by any interruption. The (figurative) malady of "sun-set, sun-rise," produced the (figurative) lock jaw, and he exclaimed thus.—"If by thirst unquenched, my mouth be locked in and cannot be forced open, why do ye not cut my belly open, and introduce water by that way so as to allay my burning thirst?"²

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. III. p. 1096. "Munnir" III 2]

1. South-east of Trichinopoly, near Tinnevely the place where St. Namāshvār is sanctified and enshrined. [Vide *Our Lives of Saints*.]

2. God in reclining posture, on bed of "kīma" symbolized as serpent. He is the same who was worshipped by Rāma, and given by him to his votary Vibhīshana on the occasion of his (Rāma's) installation ceremony in Ayodhya. Vide Rāmāyaṇa VI (Yuddh) 131-85: "Labdhvā kuladhānam &c."

3. Cf: "Oh, depth immense! Oh, fathomless and impassable gulf in which my whole being is absorbed and lost." [Thomas à Kempis: *Imit. Chr.*]

Cf: "We are only prevented

from loving God infinitely, because our will, which receives the impression of this love, cannot exceed the limits of its capacity" [St. Fr. de Sales, *Love of God*, Ch. I, Bk. III. p. 107]. "O Love! how extreme is my ardour to possess you." [St. Fr. de Sales]. "Let me die of love for thee, O God of charity!" [St. Francis] St. Catherine of Genoa and St. Therese, consumed with the burning thirst of Divine love, implored of their Saviour to give them the refreshing water of eternal life. "John, IV 15]. "O Divine Love! when wilt Thou replenish and absorb every faculty of my soul?" [St. Fr. de Sales.]

The use and abuse of the body.

Thus did Embâr lament:—Alas! that I have misused my (God-given) body! and have thus compassed for myself iniquity and ruin! When I could have steered this boat of my body aright to the haven of Heaven's beatitude, I have allowed it to be carried away by the current (of the world) and to capsize into its surf! ¹.

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. III. p. 1101, "Munnir" III 2-1.]

TOPIC 39.

Absence of God is pain and sickness.

When saints talk of pain and sickness, they mean the pain of worldly existence, or the pain accruing from the absence of God. With reference to why worldly existence, destitute of the knowledge of God, is called pain, the story of Upakosala is related. He served his Âchârya (spiritual Teacher) for a long time, but received no instruction from him. The Âchârya took it into his head to absent himself for a while from home, and commanded the disciple to tend the Holy fire in all devotion during his absence. Upakosala obeyed the command, but with melancholy in his heart that his Âchârya should bestow spiritual instruction on many other disciples, but deny or delay the same to himself. At this juncture, the Âchârya's wife accosted him thus:—"Son Upakosala! come to dinner" He mournfully answered:—"Mother, I am (already) gorged with

1. Or (a) **अक्षरमाद्यंस्तुधर्मसाधनम् ।**

(b) **विचित्रादेहसम्पत्तिरिभ्रमायनिवेदितुं ।**

पूर्वमेकतामसं हस्तपादादिसेयुता ॥

(c) Read the commentary of Âcchân Pillai on verse 1. *Tiru-môḻai dāṇḍakam* (892:2:1:1:1:1:1).

(the food of) sickness,"¹ implying that worldly existence (with out knowledge of God) is pain. Secondly, absence of God is spoken of as pain, for in the case of Bharata, do we not know that cause of pain was not any kind of physical malady such as remittent fever, but mental pang caused by separation from Râma?

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. III. p. 1101, "Munnir" III 2-1.]

TOPIC 40.

Cultivating love to God is in itself an end.

"Our constant prayer should be for eternal service to God," St Naranâzhvâr tells us. The very act of cultivating love, even before the reaping of its fruit viz., divine service, is itself an end fraught with felicity. So have the Vaishnava saints decided.² The illustration of this principle is afforded by the example of Lakshmana who said to Râma [*Râmâyana*, II. 31. 23 ff]:—

"My hands shall spade and basket bear,
And for thy feet the way prepare.
I'll bring thee roots and berries sweet,
And woodland fare which hermits eat.

1. Vide *Ukh. Up.* IV-10. "*Upakrota ! Brahmacharin abhaya-
câhârdatham âgachha &c.*"

2. Of (1)¹ "Oh, that I were able to serve Thee all the days of my life ! that I were able to serve Thee truly though but for one day ! Thou art everlastingly worth of all service, all honour, and all praise ! Thou art my gracious Lord, and I am Thy poor vessel, under infinite obligations to serve

Thee with all my strength and perpetually to celebrate Thy glorious name." [Thomas à Kempis Imit : Chri VII Bk III p. 198.]

(2) Read Râmânujâ's *Sarapigati-Gadya* for *satya-karukarya-prarthana*:—"To know God, love God and serve God" is Râmânujâ's message to mankind : On service to God, read Dr Faber's *Creator and Creature* : p 98 ff.

Thou shalt with thy Videhan Spouse (Sita)
 Recline upon the mountain's brows ;
 Be mine the toil, be mine to keep
 Watch o'er thee waking or asleep."

A funny anecdote is here related :—A certain Brâhmaṇa went to the house of his neighbour to invite him for an obsequial dinner. Not finding him at home, he left word with his wife. The wife forgot to communicate the tidings immediately on the husband's arrival home, but, recollecting, delivered it just when time for dinner had approached. He waxed wrath and beat her, growling to her in these accents :—"Alas ! so late thou tellest me this ! I have lost all the pleasures of anticipation by brooding over the dinner before time. While so where is there time for at least discussing it leisurely ?"

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. p. 1142-43, "Ozhivil" III 3-8].

TOPIC 41.

God's mercy and justice harmonised.

When Râma decided on co-ercing the King of the ocean to put in his appearance, by driving a shaft into his bosom, the Ocean King was struck with terror. He forthwith appeared and made his obeisance. Seeing him thus capitulate and sue for terms, Râma became pacified ; but informed the Ocean-King that his bow was never lifted in vain. Once lifted, its fury must vent itself somewhere. He said,—

" 'This spell is ne'er invoked in vain.
 Where shall the magic shaft, to spend
 The fury of its might, descend ?'
 'Shoot,' Ocean cried, 'thine arrow forth
 With all its fury to the north,'

where the vile race of the Ābhira-dwell." This is to show

that as soon as sinners capitulate and turn their face to God, God gives them pardon, and transfers the punishment prepared for them to their enemies. This is the way God's law of retribution is fully justified, while the rights of his goodness remain intact.¹

In illustration of this, Bhattacharya relates a comic anecdote. There was a land-holder whose head was bald. He was busy measuring out the new harvested paddy of his lands. A beggar approaching him said —

Sir, "How is it you are busy with the grain, while your fine locks are uncared for?"

Land-Holder : "What brings thee here?"

Beggar . "Nothing particular; simply to see thee."

L. H. "Good; wilt thou have one sack of grain?"

So saying, he helped the sack even on to the beggar's head to carry (flattered by him).

The beggar was going his way, when a way-farer inquired where he got the grain from.

Beggar . "There, from that man, the bald-headed." The way-farer went to the land-holder and told him the impolite way the beggar spoke about him. Thereon the land-holder

1. "The divine goodness and justice are like two arms to God, but goodness is the right arm, which begins and accomplishes almost everything, with which He wishes to appear in all His works. If men allowed it to guide them, it would lead them with benefits in keeping with its magnificence. There is a sort of division between goodness and justice: all beginnings belong to goodness, thus all things

in their first institution are very good. Justice extends only to what is added, which is sin. But there is this difference, that justice never takes anything from the rights of goodness. On the contrary, goodness sometimes anticipates those of justice; for, by pardon, it is exercised upon sins, which are the proper matter for justice" [Bonnet].

grew wroth and gave the beggar a hot pursuit. The beggar turning round said :—

“Eh! Sir, what makest thee to run in this fashion, thy fine locks so dancing?”

The pride of the land-holder was thus flattered again, and his anger departing, said, (forgetting his own baldness) :—

“Friend! I ran after thee that thou mayst receive from me and carry another sack of grain.”

[When anger turns to friendship, by praise even among men, how much more so is God won by dependence and devotion!

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. III. p. 1171 “Vēṅgadam,” III. 3-6]

TOPIC 12.

God desires our heart.

God sets greater value upon the devotion of the heart (Searcher of hearts as He is) than the material value of outward offerings which may be made. God hates hypocrisy, and estimates the sincerity of the soul.¹ The outward offerings may be trifles, but in God's eye, they carry much weight when offered in humility and devotion. This is the burden of the celestial song,—the Bhagavad Gita (ix—26):—

1 Cf (a) “My son, give me your heart” [Prov XXIII 26] “For the bed is so narrow that the one or the other must necessarily fall out; and the cloak so short that it cannot cover both at once.” [Isa XXVIII 20]

(b), We have no right to eat, or drink, or recreate ourselves without seeking with more or less

determinate intention the four-fold glory of God as our Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, and last End; and a mere mental reference to Him by a loving heart is sufficient thus to enable our most trivial doings, and to fasten it firmly to the throne of God, [p. 220: Dr Faber's Creator and Creature].

" Whoso shall offer, Me in faith and love
 A leaf, a flower, a fruit, water poured forth,
 That offering I accept, lovingly made
 With pious will "

As illustrating this, the following tradition is recorded :—

"The Champaka blossoms are favourite to Śrī Puruṣhotama [God Resident in Jagannātha, Orissa]. On one occasion, some princes had a desire to offer these flowers. Going to the flower-market they found all flowers had been sold, a single one alone being left. In buying it, competition rose amongst them, and they bid and bid till one of them staked all the enormous fortune he had, bought the flower and offered it to Jagannātha. [—the Lord of the Universe] That night God appeared in the prince's dream and said.—"(The debt of) thy flower is very heavy. I cannot bear its weight," thus showing his gracious acceptance of the sincerely made offering, so much so as to be even beyond God's capability to repay.¹

[Bhag. Viśh: Bk. III. p. 1175-6, ' Śumandu,' III. 3 7].

TOPIC 43.

Pride and humility contrasted.

Pillai-ppillai used to say :—"Look ! where we *ten* of us could squeeze ourselves in the passage here near the Punnai tree,² see these single individuals of the world with their hairy

1. (a) It is written by St. Fr. de Sales:—"We read in Exodus that goat's hair was offered in the temple, in the Old Law and that this offering was graciously accepted. This was a figure of the merit and reward, attached in the law of grace to the least actions dictated by charity, (charity—disinterested love to god). ["Trea-

tise on Love of God P. 107 Oh. II. Bk. III.]

(b) Read the whole of Dr Faber's Chapter "In what way God repays our love" [The Creator and the Creature].

2. Near the holy pond, Chandrapushkarani in the compound of Śrirāṅgam Temple.

humpy shoulders, potty bellies, and gaudy rauments, push and elbow us past here?" [Contrasting God-sick reduced people with worldlings swollen with selfish pride]*

[Bhag Vish. Bk. III. p. 1263, "Vamba" III. 54].

TOPIC 44.

Intoxicated with love of God.

If men are drunk with the love of God, they ought to dance like madmen in the streets. If they cannot, they are not love-smitten", says St. Nammāzhvār. The tradition of Mīlagālvān is here narrated:—

A certain Rāja (averse to Vaishnavism) built a cluster of houses for purposes of presentation to the poor. Mīlagālvān (Vaishnava of course) went to him and asked —

"Sire ! Grant me a portion thereof ;"

Raja — " You cannot have one ",

Mīla — " Why, is it that I am not learned in the Vedas and the Śāstras ? if so, examine me."

Raja :—" That is not the reason, you are worthy in all that, but you are disqualified, inasmuch as you belong to the sacred cult (of the Vaishnavas, as you are a follower of Rāmānjan)."

Mīla, — " Is that it ? Oh ! how glad I am. I had not thought of myself as really worthy to be called a Vaishnava ; but by thy lips at least I am made to deserve that name." So saying, he gathered up his garment, threw it up in the air, and danced

1. Cf. " Man, though a worm,
would yet be great ;

Though feeble, would seem strong ;
Assumes an independent state,
By sacrilege and wrong." [Madame

Guyon.]

" The pride of them that hate God
ascendeth continually." [Psalms
lxxiii].

2. The disciple of Rāmānjan.

for very joy.²

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. III. p. 1268. "Śādu-Śanam" III-5-5].

TOPIC 45.

The conditions of salvation illustrated.

An incident illustrative of some of the main features distinguishing between the two incarnations of God, Rāma and Krishna, is thus related.—"Śrī Rāmānuja had in his sanctum of worship, Lord Krishna as child [Krishna who wanted to eat butter every day]. One day a Śrīvaishṇava brought to him the image of Lord Rāma, upon which Rāmānuja exclaimed.—"Ah! He who did not set the spiritual rule: "Make Me thy sole Refuge" is pleased to come!" The allusion here is to the tone of loving command implied in Lord Krishna's Teaching (Bhag. Gī: XVIII-66):—

"And let go those"—

Rites and writ duties! *Fly to Me alone!*

Make me thy single Refuge! I will free

Thy soul from all its sins! Be of good cheer!;"

as contrasted with Lord Rāma's declaration to Sugrīva (Rāmāyaṇa VI. 18. 3)—on the occasion of Vibhīṣana's seeking Rāma's protection:—

1. Cf "No frowns of men can hurtful prove
To souls on fire with heavenly love;
Though men and devils both condemn,
No gloomy days arise from them."

[Madame Guyon].

Cf, "Be not impatient, My son, when men think evil of thee" * * * Thy own opinion of thyself should be much lower than others can form [Thomà Kempis. ch. xxxi. Bk. ii, P. 234] "The opinion and reports of men are as various as their persons, and are, therefore

entitled to little credit. Besides it is impossible to please all" [Id. ch. xxvii. Bk. iii, P. 250] "Like one deaf, let what is said pass by thee unnoticed, that thou mayest keep thy thoughts fixed on "the things that belong unto thy peace" [Id. ch. xxiv. Bk. iii, P. 26].

"Nor my protecting aid refuse
When one in name of friendship succ."

Here a discussion arose, as to whether the command imported by the passage: "Fly to Me alone, Make Me thy sole Refuge," did not simply mean non-opposition (on the part of the soul) when grace is offered? This negative attitude alone is not sufficient but a positive attitude of preference or predilection for God is required. This is the import. But what does predilection signify? It means purity of love for God above all things, and this purity is as difficult of attainment as the highest stage of intense and fervid love. The statement, that no more than "affectionate yielding" on the part of the soul is demanded as price of salvation, is made for the purpose of proving the infinite mercy and condescension on the part of God. If one should begin to enumerate the qualifications needed on the part of man to deserve Grace, it would begin with that hardest of attainments, viz., "Implicit trust in, and abandonment to, God [*amahā-viśvāsa*]. Is not this much at least albeit the rarity of such an accomplishment—needed, viz., the first step on the Way to Salvation? A traveller on the wide ocean is found to trust himself to a bit of wood (ship), taking with him provisions and water for six months. Must not man have some such confidence at least in God, (as Means of Salvation) when he means to launch into that bigger and endless Divine Ocean?¹

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. III p. 1331-32. "Tuyarame," III 6-8].

1 (a) Here are two principles stated (1) The ineffable abundance of God's grace, and (2) necessity of consent on the part of the creature both combining to effect the work of salvation. The connection between these two factors is closely

dated by the following passages:—

"We cannot prevent the inspirations of grace from exciting our hearts, but we can resist their impulses, and thereby reject them (*pratikṣaḍha*).

"Let us revert to the birds mentioned by Aristotle, the wind raises them, but will not enable them to proceed far, unless by extending their wings, balancing their bodies and plugging the air, they second the power of the breeze, if attracted by the appearance of some verdant spot, or hennamed from having lain a long time motionless, they neglect to profit by the rising breeze and fall again to the ground. they may indeed be said to have felt the wind, but it has been useless to them, because they failed to profit by the facility it afforded them for flying

"Thus we are aroused or excited by the inspirations of grace; in following their attractions, we co-operate with or second their power but by refusing our consent, we reject them. The voice of grace can speak to our hearts without our concurrence, but our co-operation is necessary for yielding to its inspirations."

[St. Fr. de Sale's Treatise on Love of God Bk ii Ch xii P 78-79]

(b) "The breath of inspiration is this propitious impulse of the Holy Ghost (= *Antarygmen*) by which we are lifted up and borne on high in the atmosphere of divine love. It insinuates itself into the will, and produces therein sensations of spiritual pleasure, it awakens our natural inclination to embrace what is good, and makes use of that inclination to take possession of our heart: it develops and increases this disposition, as

the wind unfolds the wings of the bird. All this takes place without our free co-operation, it is a gratuitous favour on the part of God who prevents us with his blessings. If our heart yields to the action of this heavenly wind which develops our natural inclination, we may date from this epoch the commencement of our happiness, because, when grace has once united us to it, it will unite its active exertions to our trivial efforts, it will join its powerful operations to our weak concurrence, and will conduct us from one degree of love to another, until we attain to that purity of faith necessary for our justification."

[Ibid: Ch xiii. Bk. II p 79.]

(c) " * * * give me the first inclination to follow thee, for I cannot awake of myself nor move without thy assistance; but when thou shalt have helped me to take the first step thee, O Beloved Spouse of my soul ' we shall run together, thou shalt go before me, attracting me powerfully to follow closely, and I shall run after thee and faithfully yield to thy attractions."

[Ibid. Ch. xiii. Bk. ii p 82.]

(d) " * * * the course of grace is stopped by diverting and confining its streams, and not suffering them to flow back to their divine source. For the influences of God's spirit are in large measure poured only upon the truly thankful "

[Thom à Kempis. Im Chr Ch. x. Bk iii p 158]

(e) "Jealous, and with love o'er flowing

God demands a fervent heart,
Grace and beauty still bestowing,
Calls us to a grateful part."
"Oh, then, with supreme affection
His paternal will regard." [Madame
Guyon].

(f) Extract from St. Parthamira-
thi Aranganar's Famous Book, called
the "Word-Jewel" sent for the use
of the Parliament of Religions,
Chicago, 1893. Pp. 31-32:—

The series of propitiations made by God for the salvation of souls &c.

God's superabundance of
gratuitous grace.

408. "While, in the Thrice-great Sphera, God seen all's fall,
His blest heart, dropping as if wholly starved,
[Tale the description of the hundred-sheep shepherd who goes
after his one straying sheep. Matt. xviii, 12-13; Luke xv, 4-6;
Exod. xxxiv, 8, 11]
To strayed souls, flies and sticks (as sire's heart flies
And sticks to his son who in strange lands roams);
Grieves for sinners' being so far from Him;
Grants them organs and frames, Communion-St,
And power to eat all these Communion-meats,
Himself's unseen, lest they should say "be gone!"
Yet, not able to part, indwells and hugs,
By penetrating their soul encasings self,
As mothers bear on backs, children (that sleep);
For He His children knows, though they not Him.
[Cf Aurelian, V 41:—I will march—... suffers me to tread
upon it.]

Man's non-refusal
of and concurrence
with grace.

413. "Conclude we, therefore, that God takes
unknown virtues alone
As Him appeasing offering
And show'st grace erst unknown,
Cf "Divine love is also a child of grace and benediction, because
the will cannot conceive it without the assistance of the holy
ghost who himself forms it in the heart." [St. Fr. de Sales.
"On love of God" Ch. vi-Bk 1, p. 13].

[The further refinements of this
very subtle Theological Theme may
be studied in this wonderful book,
a book which difficult to a super-
ficial reader bids fair in due
time to become the wonder of the
world.]

(g) For the more poetical and
dialectical aspect as bearing on this
subject, Ramanuja's commentaries
with Śrīrāṅgaśāstrī's elaborate gloss
thereon on the Vedānta-Sūtras II-3-40 (Parāt tu &c.) and

II-3-41 (Kṛitaprayatna &c.) may be
read, where the subject of Free-
will as the greatest gift to man, its
function, God's grace, and its meth-
od of operation are thoroughly
discussed.

[Note From fear of diffuseness,
I do not enlarge on this note,
though I fain would, but I would
call the reader's attention to the
fine disquisition on "grace work-
ing by law" [p. 144-147, A new
Analogy by Coleridge.]

TOPIC 46.

"The love of the Marvellous" illustrated by the "Two and Four-Arm" controversy.

Once on a time when Bhattar happened to be at Tiru kōṭṭiyūr, Anandāzhvân inquired of him whether God is seen in His Celestium (= *parama-pada*) as with *two* arms or with *four* arms? He replied —"The Ekāyanas¹ mention two arms, and our people four."

Quoth Ārhvân "Then which is correct?"

Bhattar. "If thou seest two arms, take it for Periyaperumāl², if four, take it for Perumāl."³

The fact was that those who had spiritual eyes saw four (arms and even more).

[Bhag. Vish. Bk III. p. 1364. "Ālum" III 7 2.]

TOPIC 47

'Two and Four Arm' discussion (continued)

Again, Nilātukkuri Bhagavar to Bhattar —"Is there any authoritative text to show that God is seen in His Celestium (= *Vaikuntha*) with four arms?"

Bhattar.—"Is not there this text. "He, the Beyond matter, the Nourisher, He with the discus, shell and mace &c."? (by Mandodari, the widow of Râvâṇa). Seeing the questioner silent and offended, Bhattar continued "Is not this authority satisfying?"⁴ [Also Hanuman alluded to *many* arms (= *bâhava* of Râma, Râmāyaṇa VI. 3. 15].

[Bhag. Vish. Bk III. pp. 1365. "Ālum" III 7-2]

1. These are the Mādhyas.

occult votaries).

2. The stationary image of Râṅga-nātha in the innermost sanctuary of the Śrīraṅgam Temple, represented with two arms (but four arms visible to the

3. The image with four arms,—moveable, and fitted for processions and other honors of worship.

4. Vishṇu is described as with four arms in all the Purāṇas and

other works, and is also known to have so incarnated. As Krishna incarnate, His parents Vasudeva and Devaki saw Him four-armed; Arjuna prayed in the Bhagavad-gītā (XI 40):—"Fain would I see thee in that four-armed Form," and Paundraka-Vasudeva—the Enemy of Krishna—imitated Him thus. As Rāma incarnate, Mandodari, the widow of Rāvana, saw Him as with four-arms and Agastya addressed Him: "Thou art Nārāyaṇa the Ancient, the Four-Armed." *I in a Hindu Journal* "X.35. The Sarmaṇ involved in Martin's reply is meant to teach that four-armedness need not necessarily be a sign of Divinity,—a sign to claim allegiance from mankind,—nor tant without it is Divinity not proved. Opportunely we received a communication from St. Parthasarathi Aiyangar, dated 22nd August 1900, Wednesday, Lucknow, which is to the point:—"The perverse childishness in professing to see something peculiarly divine in a six-handed or four-handed form is contra-distinction 'from a two-handed form,' belonging to one and the same Śarāṇa, provokes only my smile. As to a four-handed human form, I saw one such form embalmed in the Frazarid Mausoleum. Would that be *upāsya* (worthy of worship)?". Also,—with regard to Incarnation itself, God need not be prevented from taking birth among men, as men, and behave like men. Krishna exclaimed to tho'peasants:—"I am born as one of you." Rāma:—"I think of me but of the mankind". "The life of Jesus Christ" says Cellarius, "from

His birth to his death was, with one exception to be noted presently, a purely natural human life; this is what the Christian instinct has apprehended under the doctrine of His perfect manhood. * * *

"His birth was that of other men. His early years were those of a working man in a village home. We are informed * * * that He felt all the common bodily wants: hunger, thirst, pain, weariness—and shared the common blameless weaknesses of humanity—such as temptation, doubt, surprise, disappointment, and even embarrassment. * * *

"He discharged excellently all the common relationships of life such as son, brother, master, servant, host, guest, friend, citizen, patriot and king; thereby showing how, out of the common stuff of nature's manufacturing, a religious life might be lived on earth and by man." [P 156-157 A New Analogy]

Cf: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead", said Christ (Luke 16-31).

Cf "The hour came and the moon broke, and if they see any sign, they will not believe and say this is charm that has been performed." [Separa No. 27 Surai 'Algasar' Ayat 1.]

[Page 180, Vol. 37, 1896, Nineteenth Century, Dr Martineau on Ralfour's Foundation of Belief].—"That they could dispense with miracles, yet live on in consciousness of Divine relations, shows an attitude of mind touched by a deeper piety than that which cannot wake

TOPIC 48.

Honour due to visible Saints.

To discover saintliness in saints apart from their outward appearances requires more than ordinary ken in the on-looker. A good man by name Pillaiyāttān approached (the saintly) Nāñjiyar, and besought him to instruct him once in the Drāvid-opanishad.

Nāñjiyar. “Nambillai (disciple of Nāñjiyar) will do that well for thee. Go to him pray.”

Āttān. “But I may be required to prostrate to him?”

Nāñjiyar. ‘I see’ But thou mayst behave thyself as it may please thee, and he sent for Nambillai and ordered him to take Āttān through a course of the Upanishad, putting him under no disciplinary forms or ceremonies. Āttān read on as far as the Decad “Payilum,” [T. V. Mozhi iii. 71], but when he came to that, which treated of veneration due to living saints even more than to God, he turned penitent and humbly besought Nambillai that he be treated as an humble disciple and he be subjected to all external rules of discipline, such as prostrating &c., but Nambillai declined to act otherwise than as commanded by his Master. Āttān then in remorse, betook himself to Nāñjiyar, and supplicatingly submitted to him that he was unaware of the worthiness of saints before, but now

till it is salted by science and wonders.”

On accidentally turning over the pages of *Tattvanattak Pillaiyār's* Holy Songs, we chanced upon the following.—“*மற்றை ஒரு பரிசு உயிர் மருத்தொரு, தீராத துன்பம் குறி உயிர்க்கு உத்தமம் தவம் உத்தமம் குறிதவம் பத்தொருபெயர் தவத்தவம், பத்தொருபெயர்மேல் உயிர்மேல்பெயர்மேல்*”. Trans. ‘The

saints crucified to the world, will bathe when they like, eat when hungry; sleep when tired—to all appearances seeming like unto other men, &c.”

“There is perhaps no other human sentiment so prolific of evil consequences to mankind as the love of the marvellous [P. iii. “Key to Ghostism” by Rev. T. Mitchell.]

that he had come to know the same, he implored that thence forward he might be treated as an humble disciple.¹

[Bhag Vish: Bk. III. p. 1370. "Nāthanaṁ" III 7 3].

TOPIC 49.

God and the Godly Compared.

To think of God as low in our esteem is to think of Him as having no power to cleanse our sins, but to think on God's saints as higher than even God Himself in our esteem is, a rare virtue (for men may be found who hold God in esteem, but few are found who hold God's saints in greater esteem.) To illustrate this, the following incident is related of Vīra ppillai and Paṭikau-vāḷi ppillai, the two favourite disciples of Nāñjīyar. They went together on travel once on friendly terms. Some misunderstanding between them having arisen, they gave up talking to each other. Nāñjīvar seeing this, admonished them thus:—"My sons! how can one Brother be offended against another and be reserved like this? The cause of hate and anger arises because, either wealth and lust have not been eschewed; or things of God have not been felt of great worth. On receiving this reprehension, they both rose, prostrated to him and at once restored themselves into each other's affection. [This illustrates that Brotherhood among

1. Saints are apostles appointed by God on earth. God is tabernacled in them and speaks through their mouth. Read St. Pārthasārathi Aiyangar's 'Word-Jewel' from sentence 436 onwards, of Division 6, called "the Teacher's Saving Power" St. Francis de

Sales tells us that "the Holy spirit specially resides, animating the body of the church, and speaking by the mouth of the bishops, according to the promise of the Son of God." [P. Bk. Ch. XIV. Bk. II. on Love of God.]

men is even a higher virtue than Fatherhood of God' ¹

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. III, p. 1371. Nāthanai " in. 7-3].

TOPIC 50.

One moment of bereavement from God is an age.

The delay—in not realizing the Beatific Vision of God for which St. Nammāzhvār so much panted—became so insupportable to him that in the Decad of Tiruvāy-mozhi commencing with "mudiyāne" (iii-8.), the saint's consuming yearning reached such excess as to make him doubt whether even the unconscious sense-organs in his body had not more intelligence than himself and had not really excelled him in the desire to find God and whether each sense did not long to possess, singly, all the delights of the other senses put together ². To saints each moment of separation from their

1. Cf "A servant of God must not be contentious but mild and sweet towards all men, and be patient and apt to learn." [3 Tim ii. 24].

• Abstain from all debates, and you will diminish the number of sins " [Ecc. XXVIII. 16].

Cf (a) 'Let us not render any one evil for evil.' [Rom. xii-17]
 „Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us." [Matt. vi-12] "Let all sorts of harshness, anger, and indignation be banished from amongst you, and be ye sweet and merciful one to another, pardoning one another, as God has pardoned you &c." [Eph. iv-31].

"Forgive and ye shall be forgiven" [Luk. vii-37]

2. Cf Yeats to Adonis (Shakespeare).

"Had I no eyes, but ears, my ears would love

That inward beauty and invisible,
 Or, were I deaf, thy outward parts
 would move

Each part in me that were sensible:
 Though neither eyes nor ears, to
 hear nor see,

Yet should I be in love by touching
 thee."

"Say, that the sense of feeling
 were bereft me,

And that I could not see nor hear,
 nor touch,

And nothing but the very small
 were left me,

Yet would my love to thee be still
 as much ;

Beloved seemed an age.¹ So it is told of Sumantra, the minister of Daśaratha, that after he took leave of Râma (son of Daśaratha, decreed to spend 14 years in the forests) he stopped on his return journey to Ayodhya—one day with Guha, Râma's holy friend. But that one day appeared to him an interminable succession of days as he confessed to Daśaratha —

"As the two princes parted thence
I raised my hands in reverence,
Mounted my ready car and bore
The grief that stung me to the core.
With Guha many days I stayed." [Râmâyana II-50-3]
[Bhag. Vish. Bk. III. p. 1403. Mudiyaṁ " m. 8 r].

TCPIC 51.

Pride—the foe of holiness.

Self-esteem, vanity, intumescence of learning and such,

For from the still'tory of thy face
exceeding

Comes breath perfum'd, that brood-
eth love by snuffing."

"But O, What banquet wert thou
to the taste,

Being nurse and feeder of the other
four

Would they not wish the feast
might ever last,

And bid Suspicion double-lock the
door,

Lost Jealousy, that sour unwelcome
guest,

Should, by his stealing in, disturb
the feast."

1. (a) Lord Krishna suddenly
disappeared from His beloved
Gopis. In the intensity of their

woe they bewailed thus —

"When thou in day to woods goest
Each moment's absence is an age;
When Thou with radiant face
comest

O Face 'jewell'd with curly locks'—
With eyes unclowd we'd gaze at
Thee,

But fool Brahma has cyclids
made!"

[Bhāg. Par. 5-31-15]

(b) Cf. "Then tell me why
these ages of delay?"

Oh love, all excellent, once more
appear,

Disperse the shades, and snatch me
into day,

From this abyss of night these
floods of fear!"

[Madama Guyon.]

mark those men, in whom there is little of divinity, much less reverence for Divine saints. Karikkāl ṭōzhabrambarāya, who lived in the country called Kai-brahma deśa, showed to Nāñjiyar the composition by him of a commentary on Dravidopanishad (=Tiruvāmozhi). Nāñjiyar, out of regard for benefits received from this Rāya, called his disciple Nambūlar and asked him to deign to give the work a perusal. He did so and for compliment's sake remarked to the Rāya —“How well hast thou understood the heart of St. Nammāzhaṅgar, and how closely hast thou followed in his track”!

Rāya “Ah, Piḷḷai! hast thou not discerned any difference between the Saint and myself? Look, in the midst of multifarious duties, my position demands of me to fulfil, I have been able (with my superior talents) to execute this also”!

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. III. p. 1460, “Ulan āṭa” iii-9-2].

I Cf (a) “A little learning is a dangerous thing

Drink deep or taste not the Pierian spring.” Pope.

(b) “He not captivated, My son, by the subtlety and elegance of human compositions, for “the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power” [imit. Christ, Thomas à Kempis, Bk iii-Ch. xxxv].

(c) “Jāna-jana-turridagṛham Brahmapī naram na rājayati” [Bhartyāhari.]

(d) When two persons of extraordinary learning and abilities presented themselves before St Vincent de l'aul he gave them both a repulse, telling them “Your abilities raise you above our low state. Your talents may be of good service in some other place. As for me, my highest ambition is to instruct

the ignorant &c” He laid it down as a rule of humility that if possible a man ought never to speak of himself or his own concerns, such discourse usually proceeding from, and nourishing in the heart, pride and self love. This indeed is a rule prescribed by Confucius, Aristotle, Cato, Pliny, and other philosophers, because, say they, for any one to boast of himself is always the most intolerable and barefaced pride, and modesty in such discourse will be suspected of secret vanity. Egotism or the itch of speaking always of a man's self shows he is intoxicated with the poison of self love, refers everything to himself, and is his own centre than which scarce anything can be more odious and offensive to others” [P. 303, Vol. VII Butler's Lives of Saints.]

TOPIC 52.

The prodigality of God's bounty

The bounty of God will be worthy of His Infinite Self¹. This is illustrated by the following incident in the History of Lord Rāma — Before going into the forest, the Lord made great gifts. He stood alone like a poor man after having surrendered the throne and the royal elephant Śatruñjāya, when a poor Brāhman, Tryata by name, came up running —

“ O Rāma, poor and weak am I,
And many children round me cry
Scant living in the woods I earn ‘
On me thine eye of pity turn ”

And Rāma said —

“ The cows on thee will I bestow
As far as thou thy staff canst throw

* * * *

These thousand kine, but not alone ;
Their herdsmen too, are all thine own
And wealth beside I give thee speak,
Thine shall be all thy heart can seek.”

[Rāmāyaṇa · ii 32]

[Bhag. Viśv. Bk. III p. 1478, “ Śérut,” iii-9-7.]

1. Read Lecture I “ The Love of God in creation,” by Frederick Canon Oakeley, M.A. From Lecture I. “ The Ways of God in Creation,” the following beautiful extract is made : * * * another characteristic of the gifts of the Creator, I mean their profusion. Magnificence is eminently one of the qualities by which they are distinguished. By a magnificent giver we mean one who does not measure

his gifts by the strict necessities or those who are the recipients of his bounty, but gives them enough and to spare. In this respect he may be said to reverse the proverbial rule of human prudence by being generous before he is just. He is willing to encounter the charge of prodigality rather than to incur the risk of parsimony. He is not inquisitive or critical as to the use of his bounty, nor over-studious

TOPIC 53.

Vicarious expiation.

One day the washerman of the holy men of Śrīraṅgam brought clothes, particularly well washed that day, to Rāmānuja. He was so rejoiced at the loving care bestowed by the washerman that he led him by his own hands to the presence of God Rāṅganātha, and addressed Him thus —“ So well fitting thy August Self, has this washerman prepared the clothes for Thee! Prithvi, deign to accept and wear them”, on which Rāṅganātha condescended to Rāmānuja, and said —“ For the loving service of this washerman, I have condoned the offence of the “ washerman of the Kṛṣṇāvatāra.”

[Bhag: Vish: Bk. IV. p. 1648, Kaṇṇi " 11-3-5].

about a waste which involves no blame and entails no injury * * * * In his gifts is neither sadness nor constraint. They are not merely abundant but exuberant. Their number far exceeds, not only the necessities of the recipients, but even his power of using them. They are multiplied, as it should seem chiefly in order to indicate the profuse generosity as well as the boundless resources of the Giver."

Et Fr de Sales in his Treatise on the Love of God (Ck xv. Bk p 37) says: "As satisfaction is a Cf Bhaktiāya's:

consequence of happiness, it follows from this principle that the Almighty takes more pleasure in dispensing to us the effects of his bounty, than we can feel in receiving them."

"Nurses sometimes have so great an abundance of milk, that for their own relief they are obliged to seek some child to deprive them of it. Though the infant pressed by hunger partakes of it with avidity, the nurse is more anxious to impart her nourishment than the child to receive it."

ऐश्वर्यमक्षरगतैपरमंपदं वाकस्मैचिदांजलिमंत्रवद्वेतिवितर्यै

अस्मैनाकिंचिदुचितंकृतमित्ययान्वत्वंजत्रसेक्ययकोपमुदारभावः॥

[Verse 53, Śrī gṛha-ratna-kośa].

1. Both Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, the brothers, loitered through the streets of Mathura on their way to meet king Kamsa. They saw the

royal washerman coming, and begged him to lend them both fitting apparel (to appear becoming before Kamsa). But he was puffed up with

TOPIC 54.

Overwhelming Divine ecstasy jeopardising existence.

It is said that deluged with Divine love, and therefore not able to swim in its ocean, St. Nammāzhvār felt as if his very individual being was dissolved. A mother and her son once lived together in dire poverty. The son was a man of parts so that on one occasion a munificent gift—of the kind called *Ubhaya mukha go-dana** fell to his lot, and he brought home abundance of riches. The mother on seeing it was so overcome with elation of joy that she died instantly.†

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. IV, p. 166g, “Māṇḍaḥ 14 4 1].

TOPIC 55.

God everywhere to the seeing Saint (1st Illustration)

To St. Nammāzhvār, divine consciousness had so much

the pride of being the King's favorite, and had the effrontery to give in tongue a free license to heap reproaches on the Divine brothers. The affront irritated Krishna, who administered the vile creature a hard slap and knocked his head down to roll in the dust [see *Pishnu Par* V-12 14 to 16]. The sins of one man are rectified by the services of another made acceptable by an interceder is the great principle here illustrated. In other words, God's grace operates freely by the law of vicarious redemption, and atonement.

Of (a) “For, as by the disobedience of one man, many sinned; so, by the obedience of one, many were justified” [Rom. V 19.]

(b) Also read [Jhal V 15 to 19.]

(c) Read Genesis XVIII-23 to 32

“Hearkest thou, saith he (Abraham), be not angry, Lord, if I speak yet once more: what if ten should be found there (Sodom)? And he (Lord) said: I will not destroy it for the sake of ten (good men).”

1. Literally “Opposito-Fecit cow-gift.” This means the gift of a cow made when it is but half-delivered of calf. Unless this gift is accompanied with a large sum of money no one accepts it. To accept it is to accept the sin of the giver.

2. Love “is strong as death” [Canticles, viii, 6].

“Divine love is sometimes so violent that it actually separates the soul from the body.”

[Ch. IX Bk. VII. St. Fr. de Sale's Love of God].

developed as that every external object and event appeared to him as replete (or infilled) with Divinity.¹ It is related of St Nāthamuni, that when he saw the King of the land mounting his elephant by planting one foot on the head of a tributary prince of his, he exclaimed. "Like this, isn't it, my Universal Sovereign rides His vehicle Garuda² by planting His foot on such world-lords as Brahmā (the demurge) and others ? "

On another occasion, the King of the land with his retinue passed by St. Nāthamuni's place on his way to Gaṅgaikonda-Sozha-puram. Nāthamuniḡal was at the time engaged in worshipping God Maṃmanār of Virānam. His daughter ran in and said —

"Father, I saw a monkey, and two men with bows and a maiden enter our house."

The saint imagined the monkey to be Hanumān (the famed author of the Andra grammar, and messenger of Rāma), the two men to be Rāma and Lakshmana, the maiden to be Sita, and proceeded in haste to see them. Those in the way saying "there, there, they go", the saint pursued in the

1 Cf. (a) "The Hindus believe (and their Saints realise) " God to reside and to act as an inviolable power in the visible things, like our soul in our body " (P. 24 Rev. L. Maurin's Lectures, Bombay,

12) and a certain intensification of Holy Desire called Parama-bhakti [ib. xviii 54,55]. Athelst Niranya hasipō contemptuously enquired saying

"show me where God is ?"

Saint Prāhāda or the supremy Nest of God answered and saying "show me where God is not ?"

[Letter of Yogi Pārthasārathi, d. 15-7-1900. Lucknow]

2. The same as Kerub or Cherub. For esoteric meaning, consult Nārāyaṇaṅgar's Indo-Aryan Mythology

(b). The theory of gravitation was not accurately verified till the Telescope was improved. The scientific method, i.e. the law of evidence, is the same here too, i.e., in the Science of divinity also. Only the apparatus for verification is different. It is not a particular kind and adjustment of lemons, but a particular kind of mental clearness, called *ṣānti* (=Peace. Cf vii-

direction, and came to the outer door, and asked the keepers there whether they did not see such a group as he imagined. When they said "no", he fell down and breathed his last.¹

[Bhag. Vish., Bk. IV. 1706, "Tiruvudai" iv 4-8].

TOPIC 56.

God everywhere to seeing saints (2nd Illustration.)

Rāmānuja was one day begging his alms (as became ascetics of his order) ² in the thoroughfare of Srirangam. Boys drew some figures on the floor with their toes, and pointing to them, cried to Rāmānuja "Here is your God's image." forthwith he put his bowl down, prostrated and went his way

TOPIC 57.

God everywhere to seeing saints (3rd Illustration.)

Nañjiyar used to relate of Rāmānuja that on one of the

1. Cf. Bhag. Gt. x 41. Lord Krishna saying:—

"For whenceso'er is wondrous work, and majesty, and might, From me hath all proceeded.

Receive thou this aright."

At the mere mention of Hari, Chaitanya fell into ecstasy, see Lord Gauranga by Sisir Kumar Ghose.

The passion of St John the Cross was so great that "the very name of the sufferings of Christ or sight of a crucifix, threw him into raptures of sweet love, and made him melt in tears," [Vol xi, p 400. Butler's Lives of the Saints]

See Topics Nos. 56 & 57 (the acts

of Rāmānuja). Bh. Gt. vii 10, tells us that "such saints are rare to whom God is all."

2. Cf. (a) St. Francis Assisi said: "Thus I ask for me and mine that for the glory of thy Holy Name we never possess anything under heaven, and receive our subsistence itself from the charity of others."

[Butler's Lives of Saints, p. 130 vol. x].

(b) "If we receive nothing for our work, let us have recourse to the table of the Lord, the begging alms from door to door."

[Ibid: p. 141]

days of his begging excursions, he came across a number of boys. They were imitating on the ground all that the Elders did in the Great Temple of Raṅganātha. They had drawn the Temple, the separate chambers therein allotted for God, and His Consort (Lakshmī), and the ceremony of the worship had progressed till it came to the offerings of food. The boys gathered handfuls of sand for the purpose, and after going through the formality of offering it to the Gods, presented it to Rāmānuja for acceptance as holy food. He at once prostrated on the ground and received the offered food in his bowl.

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. p. 1299, 1st Tiruvandādi 44].

TOPIC 58.

God everywhere to seeing saints (1th Illustration.)

In the town called Rājendra-śoṣhan, a saint by name Tiruv āyk-kulattāzhvār lived. Once in the rainy season he left his house to go and inspect his crops. On the way he sighted the clouds above, which put him in mind of the cloud-colored Deity Viṣṇu, so much so that he was seized with extatic trance and he fell down. One of the cultivators [the land tenants] of the saint who was watching, ran up, lifted him up gently and brought him back home; and reproached the inmates for having allowed a saint of his tender temperament to go out for field-inspection in the rainy season.¹

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. II, 1710. "Maṇṇai" iv-4-9]

¹ It is related of Embār Swāmi alias Maḍhuraṁaḡalam Jīyar, who lived (about 1855) in Śrī-perumbūdūr—the birth place of Rāmānuja—that as he reached the top of the hill of Nṛsiṁhasvāmi at Nalkota (alias Tiru-Nārāyaṇa

Puram) he studied the imprints of feet and hands (made by boys) on a wall. He thereon taking them for so many impressions of God's hands and feet touched them reverently with his garment, pressed them to his eyes and prostrated.

TOPIC 59.

What constitute Fitness and Unfitness to praise God.

"I wish to hymn Thee in fitting terms" —said St. Nāmaṁbāḥiṛ. Some one asked,—"How is this consistent with the Saint's confession in another place that, "to praise Him, no fitting terms could be found &c". This objection is met by the following narrative. A holy man living in Tirupati casually set fall, in the course of conversation with Tiruvēṅgaḍam-udaiyān (God Resident) that St. Tirumangaiy-āḍavār's Hymnal treating of Him [see Periya Tirumozhi, 24-10] was but a show made as if belauding Him, whereas it was full of self-adulation, [inasmuch as each verse ended by a praise of the author who chanted the hymn]. To this God replied "But art thou not aware that *before* He declared his loyalty to Me, there was no self-adulation, but only *after* his allegiance to Me. *After* allegiance, all self-adulation acquires the virtue of praise offered to Myself." The gist of this is that God cannot be praised by uninspired men, but when inspired by God Himself, they become the most worthy instruments to praise Him."

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. iv, p. 1760, "Kariya" ix 36]

* Cf.: (a) Vāṁśadehārya's Hymn, verse 5

यद्वाञ्छमावर्धययामतेवाप्यशक्तः

स्तीर्ण्येवमेवखलुतेऽपिसदास्तुवन्तः ।

वेदाश्चतुर्मुखमुखाश्चनहार्णवान्तः

कोमञ्जतीरणुकुलाचलयोर्भक्षिणः ॥

(b) Oh we can but bring our drop to this Sea and our candle, dim and dark as it is, to this clear and lightsome Sun of heaven and earth' [P. 214 Rev. S. Rutherford's Select Letters.]

(c) Cp. *Amiel's Journal* p. 239;—

"I feel most strongly that man, in all that he does or can do which is beautiful, great or good, is but the organ and the vehicle of something or some one higher than himself. This feeling is religion. The religious man takes part with a tremor

TOPIC 60.

The days and nights of the soul or vicissitudes in Spiritual Life.

The vicissitudes experienced by St. Nāmmāzhvār in the spiritual life, are characterized on the one hand by an exaltation of spirit, and overflow of emotion in which his very life seems melted and lost, and characterized on the other hand by a desolation of spirit and aridity of heart abyssal in depth. These alternations, the former conspicuous when God is present, and the latter conspicuous when he is away—constitute the chief feature of the Saint's Tiruvāmozhi Hymnal, Decad, iv-6 [Tirpārai] ' Otherwise, between the one and the other, no

of sacred joy in these phenomena of which he is the intermediary but not the source, of which he is the scene, but not the author, or rather, the poet. He lends them voice, hand, will, and help, but he is respectfully careful to efface himself that he may alter as little as possible the higher work of the Genius who is making a momentary use of him.

I Cf. (a) When love departs,
a chthon wide and vast,

And dark as hell, is opened in the
soul,

When love returns, the gloomy
scene is past.

No tempests shake her and no fears
control "

(b) "Then to love, and none be-
side,

Was my darling sole employ,

While alternately I died,

Now of grief and now of joy,"

(c) 'This vicissitude of day and night in the spiritual life is neither new nor unexpected to those that are acquainted with the ways of

God, for the ancient prophets and the most eminent saints have all experienced an alternative of visitation and desertion. As an instance of this, the royal prophet describes his own case. "When I was in prosperity" says he "and my heart was filled with the treasures of grace, I said I shall never be moved. But these treasures being soon taken away and feeling in himself the poverty of fallen nature he adds. "Then didst turn Thy face from me and I was troubled." Yet in this disconsolate state he does not despair, but with more ardour raises his desire and prayer to God: "Unto Thee O Lord, will I cry, and I will make my supplication unto my God." [Thos: à Kempis Imit. Chr: p. 249 Bk II. 9].

(d) 'In Christ's absence I confess, the work both behind, but if you mean absence of comfort and absence of sense of His sweet presence, I think that absence is Christ's trying of us, not simply our sin against Him." [P: 170-1 Rev. S. Rutherford's Select Letters].

coherency in the shape of continuity of a theme is predicable "This polarity in love is emphatically discernible between Decad. iv. 5 [Vīṭṭu], and Decad. iv-6 [Tīrpārai]", said Bhattar, "but if a more consistent kind of link between the two sections be still demanded of me, I must only refer you to the case of rice and curds. For a certain customer brought a measure of rice to a hotel and asked the bar-maid to cook it for him. She got it ready, called him and spread the leaf for him to eat. He sat down with a vessel full of curds by his side. Rice was served. He poured curds over it—"Two much curds, more rice please," he cried. She brought some. He poured curds. "Too much curds, rice please", he again cried. And this went on until mine-host was tired of serving him and she saucily remarked:—"Thy curds seem never ending. Is it possible I have rice enough to meet thy demand?" ["So I cannot every time satisfy demands made for establishing links between the satiate and the disconsolate states of the Saint" said Bhattar]

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. IV. p. 1784, "Tīrpārai,, iv-6 1].

TOPIC 61.

The one God Supreme above all others.

Before the One God, all lesser gods crouch and tremble,¹
This fact was exemplified in the days of Pillāy-uraṅgāvali

(c) "The religious state is one of deep enthusiasm, of moved contemplation of tranquil ecstasy. But how rare a state it is for us poor creatures harassed by duty, by necessity, by the wicked world, by sin, by illness!"

[P. 240, *Amiel's Journal*].

1 Cf. (a) [Tait. 1 p. Ānandavallī n-8-1 t].

"Bhaskātmā āc"="From fear of Him, blows the wind, From fear of Him rises the sun, from fear of Him, act Agni and Indra, and Death itself runs away from Him in fear."

(b) Also read *Kenopaniṣad*, in for the Power of the one God styled "Yakṣam" over other Powers of the Kosmos.

Dāsar. One of his land tenants was put into tortures by the village deity called Aiyānār. The deity was asked to mention what measures would serve to propitiate it and appease its wrath. It said —“ I want milk and fruits, I must be smeared with scented sandal, I must be nicely dressed, and nicely decked with jewels, I must ride in a litter; and umbrellas must be held over me.” The villagers consented and going to the house of their master the Dāsar, borrowed all the things mentioned, and did to the deity as directed, and retired, after the propitiation ceremonies, to rest. That night however the torments of the obsessed tenant were redoubled. Aiyānār was questioned as to the why of this again. It gave out —“ Ye have brought me the articles used by Dāsar; ye have placed me under *his* umbrella. How can I go under *it*? Ye have exposed me as it were to the sun; ye have smeared fire over my body, by smearing me with *his* sandal-paste; ye have hung heavy irons over my shoulders by decking me with *his* ornaments; for what ye have done, I shall not depart before taking th's man's life”, and thus the deity multiplied its tortures. Dāsar is believer in the one Supreme God, hence the pre-eminence of himself and his belongings over the so-called gods of inferior types. ¹

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. IV. p. 1809, “Tisukhara” 15-6-2.]

TOPIC 62

The efficacy of God's Holy Name alone, the Sovereign Remedy for all ills.

As a cure for those who are stricken with agony by the withdrawal of God's Fellowship, no quacks' nostrum is efficacious, such as invoking inferior deities,—deities who like vampires ask for vile things, such as flesh and liquor being

1. Read pp. 67-68, Max Müller's Six Systems.

offered as propitiation!—, the only sovereign salve for God-sick souls is God Himself, and calling on His Holy Names. A story goes of a man who used to be afflicted with liver complaints. He sought the physician for a remedy. "For forty days live on milk-diet" the physician prescribed. Being poor, he hit upon a device. Happening to be the neighbour of a dairy-farm, he daily visited the spot where pots-full of milk were kept, and devoutly prostrated to the same. This cured him. "This is to show that the lawful use of the Holy Name of God, in reverence and love, is a panacea for all ills]"

Bhag. Vish. Bk. IV p. 1835, "Ivala" ix 6-5)

TOPIC 61.

The dust of the feet of God's Holy Saints even more efficacious.

Even more efficacious than the Holy Name of God is the

1 "What multitudes of men, women, children, oxen, sheep, goats and other animals, have even the more enlightened Humans sacrificed upon their abominable altars! The finest horses, harts, hogs, lambs, and bulls were respectively devoted [upon every trifling occasion to Apollo, Diana, Ceres, Proserpine, and Neptune for each deity and its peculiar offering. It was a system not less injurious to the common interest than it was disgraceful to the feelings of humanity." [P. 273, Ch. vii. "Religious Melancholy, by Burton."]

2. (a) Among the Aryans the Holy Name of God is woven into a *mantra*, the latter term meaning that which saves those who devoutly repeat it. It ought not to be imparted to the undeserving, and

ought not to be made use of lightly. The heart must be contrite and humble and full of faith and confidence. A Christian Author, F. C. Oakley M. A. in his "Voice of Creation" p. 78, writes thus.— "The reverence due to God and all that belongs to Him forbids the unguarded use of His Awful Name except in companies where it is sure to be treated with honour, or in places where it is protected from disrespect by the circumstances and associations under which it is employed. This method of dealing with holy things is what our Blessed Lord recommends in telling us not to cast our pearls before those who will trample on them." Thus our Holy Mantras are called *Rahasyas* or *Secrets*.

[(b) & (c) see P. 76].

Holy dust of the feet of His saints, to remove contamination from inferior deities. Once it happened thus:—Vandar and Sondar were two devout followers of Rāmānuja. Akalaṅka-nāṭi āzhvān the Prince, (probably to have a joke with them, or to test their faith) showed them a Jaina-temple, and said—“Here is your Holy court yard, here your Lion (sign of Vishṇu Temple), fall down and worship.” They believed him and reverently did as told. And then they came to know they were duped, as the temple where they worshipped was a Jaina-temple (antagonistic to Vaishnavism). The shock from this revelation made them faint. Pillay-uraṅgā-villī-dāsar, the intimate disciple of Rāmānuja, proceeded to the spot, and sprinkled them with the dust of his feet. They revived and rose.

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. IV. p. 1889, “Tanyum” ix-6-6]

(b) Queen Draupadi exclaimed thus

क्षस्त्रचक्रगदापाणे हरकानिलयाच्युत ।

गोविन्दपुण्डरीकाक्ष रक्षसांशम्पागतां ॥

[Maha-Bhā. Udyoga 66-43.]

गमादिदोषान्सततानुरक्तान्

अशेषकायप्रसृतानशेषान् ।

अस्त्रिक्वम्प्रेहागतिदान्अघान्

यःपूर्ववैशायनभोस्तुतस्मै ॥

[Āyurveda.]

(c) The Royal Saint Kulasekhara's Makandamāla, verse 17 runs thus—

हेलोकाःश्रुणुतप्रसूतिमरणव्याघेश्विकित्ताभिमां

योगज्ञास्समुदाहरन्तिमुनयोयांयावन्नवन्मदयः ।

अन्तर्ज्योतिरमेयनेकममृतं रुष्णाख्यमापीयजं

तत्पीतंपन्नौषधंनितनुतेनिर्वाणमायन्तिकम् ॥

[14]. See P. 75].

TOPIC 64.

The efficacy of Holy Men's Foot-dust.

Moreover the said dust is also efficacious in healing the God-sick souls.¹ The following conversation took place on this theme. Once on an occasion, Nañjiyar and his disciples were assembled together in an enclosure near the Holy Pavilion in the compound of the Temple of Lord Rāṅganātha, and the theme, of St. Nammāzhvār prescribing the Dust of saints' feet as cure for the God-afflicted, came to be discussed. Nambullai, the Chief Disciple asked.—“Is n't the Cause Itself the Cure also for the God-sick? for the Cause for producing distress, was mentioned to be the Holy Charioteer, Lord Krishna Himself [i.e., distress consequent on His absence]. To relieve this then, is not He Himself the Sovereign Salve? While so, He is mentioned as the Cause of the malady, but the Dust of the saints is prescribed as its cure! Can the cause then be one, and the cure another?”

Replied Nambullai.—“Hear me. When people are in fits (=delirious of God)², we cannot give them butter-milk (=antidote) at once to drink; but must first apply to their nostrils ginger-powder. Besides, when butter-milk is asked for, and it

(d) Cp. Jesus Christ, the great Physician of value, the only Sovereign Physician of the soul, who by his blood and spirit cures all our spiritual sicknesses.”

[Grudden's Consolations under 'Physician.']

L. (a) The very touch, the very sight, the very hem of the garment, the very shadow and other relics of holy men, have been recorded as thus efficacious. Recall the lives of Rāmānjan, of Jesus, and of the holy saints of every land.

(b) Cp. Harivamsa Ch. 30 वारियेध्याम्यहंपांसु ॥

2. St. Fr. de Sales tells us [Rk vii, Ch. x, p. 278, on Love of God]

“There are persons, who by yielding without reserve to the influence of Divine Love, augment its ardour to such a degree, that in the end it entirely consumes them. These ardent lovers of the Al-

mighty are like persons enduring some weighty affliction, the excess of grief sometimes deprives them for so long a time of food and sleep, that they are reduced to extreme debility, which soon leads to death.”

is not readily forthcoming, we must resort to such other remedies as are ready to hand. Thus, when Lord Krishna (butter-milk) is longed after, and He cannot be produced at once, we have to adopt preliminary measures, such as that of sprinkling Holy men's Dust (ginger-dust), and when the patient recovers his breath somewhat, then only may the sovereign Remedy—the vision Beatific of Lord Krishna—be presented to him."

Bhag. Vish. Bk. IV. p. 1830, "Tanivum" ix. 6-61.

TOPIC 65.

Love of God unto death.

It is now shown that if saintly men be not admitted as *immediate* Saviours,—as illustrated above by the curative power of their Holy foot dust—they are at least efficient functionaries for performing mediatorial offices between souls and God. In other words, they do possess the power of vicarious pleading with God, and procure for souls their redemption. There lived a saint by name Tiruk-kanna-maṅṅai-āṇḍān remarkable for his ardent love of God, and who worshipped at the Adorable Shrine of Lord Pattarāvi (The life of lovers). He was so far risen in holiness as to put entire trust and confidence in God, so much so that he entirely abandoned his soul unto His keeping, and ceased from every activity which may savour of trust in self, and of distrust in God. He laid himself down at the door of the Sanctuary of the Lord prepared to die for Him, and thus exemplify his whole-hearted love and trust in Him! His disciple ran to him and weeping, prayed to him

1 Cp. (a) "Thy love, O God, is strong as death" (Canticles, viii. 6). Says St. Fr. de Sales in his 'Love of God' [Bk. vii, Ch. ix, p. 276]:—
" * * * divine love is sometimes so violent, that it actually separates

the soul from the body, and by causing the death of those who love, it renders them infinitely happier than if it bestowed on them a thousand lives."

[Continued on page 78].

thus —“God-Sire! after thy departure, what hope is there for me?” The master consoled him thus —“Son! remain by my side, that is enough for thee.” The disciple carried out this command to the very letter and expiring even before the master mounted to the abode of the Blessed Three days after, the Master winged his flight to the regions of glory [The disciple's incident also illustrating that the mere act of acceptance of a disciple by his godly master secures a passport to Heaven?]

[Bhag. Vish. Vol. IV, p. 1844, ‘Vedam’ iv-6-8.]

TOPIC 66.

Martyrdom.

Kurattāzhvar, the immediate disciple and lover of Rāmānuja, was a martyr to the Cause of Vaishnavism. Krimkantha Chōja, the reigning prince at the time of the Chōja-Kingdom was a bigotted Śaiva. Like Mahomet's followers converting people by their sword, he had undertaken a crusade

“As the lot of the reprobate is to die in sin, that of the elect is to expire in the love and grace of God, which is effected in several ways.”

(b) [Thomas à Kempis, *Imit. Chri.* p. 109]: “Blessed is the man who continually anticipates the hour of his death [vide Bh. G. xiii. 8: “*jānma ātē*” and keeps himself in continual preparation for its approach.”

(c) “The Prepared and Ready

(d) St. Yāmunāchārya sang:—

कषानिरस्तोपशिशुस्तनन्धयो ।

नजातुमातुश्चरणौमिहसाति ॥

ever welcome Death as their most endearing host” is the translation of “*kṛtākṛtyaḥ pratyakṣate mṛtyuṁ prapya-śāntikām*.”

(d) Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him’ (Job xiii. 15) “Faith’s eyes, that can see through a millstone, can see through a gloom of God, and under it read God’s thoughts of love and peace.”

P. 230 Rev. S. Rutherford’s Select Letters

[V. 36. Stotra-Ratna].

Rom. xv-20; Eph. vi 18-19; 1 Thess. v-25, Heb-xiii-18; James v-16.

1 For corroborative texts in the Bible, of this truth, see *Exod* xxxv-11-14; *Kings* viii-8-10 *Joh* xiii-7-8;

of religious persecution, in the course of which he forcibly compelled every one to sign a bull he had proclaimed, to the effect that there was no other God but Śiva. Āzhvān was one of those so forced. In court, he was ordered to sign the declaration. He stoutly refused. Thereon the king ordered his eyes being plucked out. When, Āzhvān himself plucked them out, exclaiming,—“These eyes, evil after having seen thee, shall not be.”¹ Rāmānuja’s heart bled at this catastrophe, and from that moment sorely longed for restoration of his eye-sight. The blinded Āzhvān (like Milton) composed at this time the famous Hymnal known as the Varada-rāja-stava (or Psalm in honor of Lord Varada rāja, Resident in Kāñcīperam). On hearing one verse out of this (viz., verse 23, beginning “nīla megha &c.”²) Rāmānuja was so rejoiced that he exclaimed,—“Āzhvān! I cannot bear to see thee so distressed, being deprived of eyesight. It matters not now if by pressing on God our petition, we transgress the law of utter resignation and submission to His will. If *thou* dost not care to urge *thy* will against God’s, at least I conjure thee to do so for *my* sake. Prithae, go to Lord Varada and sing to Him.” Āzhvān carried out his Master’s behest and returned.

1. Cp: St. Ignatius * (Bishop of Antioch A. D. 107) conduct before the tyrant Trajan—Trajan asked: “Do not we seem to thee to bear the Gods in our breasts, whom we have existing we against our enemies?” Ignatius replied—“You err in calling those gods

who are no better than devils, for there is only one God, who made heaven and earth, and all things that are in them” (=a part of the meaning contained in the Holy Name Nārāyaṇa) [Hutler’s Lives of Saints, Vol II p. 13,].

३

नीलमेघानिभमंजनपुंज

श्यामकुन्तलमनन्तशर्बलां ।

अब्जपाणिपदभम्बजनेत्रं

नेत्रसात्कुरुकरीससदाये ॥

Has He deigned to favour thee (i.e., grant thee eyes) ? ” asked Rāmānuja. “ No ”, answered Kūranātha.

“ But did you hymn Lord Varada with the motive needed ? ”

“ Sire, yes ”, (concealing his *motivelessness*, out of respect of his master’s injunction to hymn *with the motive* of regaining the lost eye-sight)

‘ Recite one verse then out of those Hymns, pray ’

Āzhvān recited verse 22, beginning: “ *Ivām udāra* ” &c.,¹

Rāmānuja was so delighted with its sweetness and meaning, that he exclaimed :—

‘ How could not have God condescended to thee, after stering to such ravishing music of thy hymn ? Āzhvān ! turn to me, let me scan thy face.’

Rāmānuja’s anxious care for Āzhvān’s welfare had provoked in him certain conviction that his disciple *had* obtained eye-sight from the All Merciful. Hence his scanning²

[Bhag. Vish.: Bk. IV p. 1887 “ *Nokki* ” iv-7-6.]

TOPIC 67.

Grateful submission to spiritual Discipline.

Once in the holy monastery of Rāmānuja, an entertainment was being given to the devotees of the place. Ācchān (Kadāimōi-ācchān), the disciple of Rāmānuja, served at the entertainment, during the course of which, Rāmānuja noticed

1

त्वामुदारभुञ्जन्मनसमायतू

कर्णपाशपरिकर्मसदसं ।

आयताक्षममिजातकपोलं

पारणीयतिवरपद् दृष्ट्वे ॥

him serving drinking water' standing sideways [a sort of indifferent attitude indicating want of sufficient respect for the guests'. He ran up to Ācchân, and striking him on the back, thundered out "Fool! Knowest thou not manners,—that thou servest not guests by facing them right in their front reverently?" Ācchân never felt injured, but at once exhibited feelings of gratitude for the master's correction, administered out of his abundance of love for him, and in delight thereon, recited St. Nammāzhar's verse:

"O Lord! Thou hast vouchsafed to help
Me render all Divine Service;
Though humble I,
In service high!"

Bhag: Vish. Bk. IV, p. 1918, "Maṇimāma" iv-8-2]

(1) Of (a), "Do you think that God would have you offer victims and holocausts? No, he would rather have you obey his commands, because obedience is far better than victims, and it is better for you to comply with His will than to offer him the fat of rams" [Kings xv 22].

(b) The Carthusian monks made no other vow than this,—*"I promise obedience according to the rule."*

(c) St. Paul was struck with a light from heaven, and seized with fear. He cried, "Lord, what wouldst thou have me do?" [Acts ix 7].

(d) The Centurion to Christ "I have soldiers under me, and I say to this, go, and he goes, and to

another, come, and he comes; and to my servant, do this, and he does it." [Mat vii 9].

(e) St. Ignatius used frequently to say that if his Holiness should command him to embark in a vessel without mast, sail, or helm, or any other thing necessary for a voyage, he would unquestioningly obey him, not only without uneasiness or repugnance, but with great interior satisfaction.

(f) "Obey your superiors, and be subject to them, for they watch continually, having to give account for your souls, and obey them so that they may discharge their duty with joy, not sorrow; for that would do you no good."

[Heb-xiii 17.]

What is not God's is no use being ours.

What if I can call my heart my own, if it be not the object of God's affection? ' exclaimed St. Nammāzhvār. To this Nāṣiṭṭiyar gave an example — 'The lover delayed coming; and therefore the mistress who had intended scented sandal for his service, broke the bottle which contained it, (for, what use is it without the lover?)' Thus the heart is a desirable possession when it can be of service to him alone; otherwise, it is fit to be thrown away.¹

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. IV. p. 1919. "Maṇi-māmaḥ" iv 8 2]

TOPIC 69.

Disinterested love to God.

The highest love to God is the love of charity, *i.e.*, love rendered to God for God's sake,—love, culminating in benediction or glorification of God. Love so disinterestedly rendered

1 Cp (c) — "Sūti to Anasūya
[Rāmāyaṇa, ii. 118]. —

'No marvel, best of dames, thy
speech

The duties of a wife should teach:
Yat I, O lady, also know

Due reverence to my lord to show.
Were he the meanest of the base
Unhonoured with a single grace,

My husband still I ne'er would
leave

But first through all, to him would
cleave."

(b) Sūti (Ibid. v. 28-5)

Here for my lord I weep and sigh
And worn with woe would gladly
die,

For what is life to me afar
From Nāma of the mighty ear."

[Madame Guyon's *Lances*] :—

(c) "The heart, that values less
its ease

Than it adores Thy ways."

(d) "Could I be east where Thou
art not,

That were indeed a dreadful lot;
But regions none remote I call,
Secure of finding God in all."

(e) "The lust the love of self you
see,

Fix all your love on God alone.

Choose but his will, and hate your
own "

[(f) See p. 83.]

is love of purity and virginity, which carries with it the highest fruit, viz., the possession of God. When that is secure, all other secondary fruits are of necessity implied therein.¹ This is illustrated by the story of Śavitri,² a matchless example of chastity and fidelity to her Lord. Her parents had decided on a husband for her, when Rishi Nārada happened to come and told them that the intended bridegroom was not destined to live long. At this the parents were taken aback, but Savitri insisted that she would not allow the purity of their first intention being sullied by their change of mind. "Him alone I would have for my mate," she beseeched, "give me to him, I stand surety for his life."³ The parents could not resist her, and so oblated her to Satyavan. As foretold by Nārada, the term of

(1) Sage Ālavandār's The Song-gem, verses 57

ननेहनप्राजानचसुखमशेषामखीषितं
नचात्मानंनान्यत्किमपेतवशेषत्वविभवात्
बहिर्भूतनामक्षणीपसहेयातुशतधा ।
विनाशतत्सलंमधुमश्नविज्रापनविदं ॥

Not body, life, nor all the good
the world

Can give, nor soul itself, do I desire,
If they to Thee do not as sole be-
long.

Not Thine,? I cannot bear for one
instant,

Not Thine,? is hundred ways to
ruin go.

I make my truth, Lord! what I say
is truth.

1 All Vaidhāra mints prayers are of this form. They asked for no blessings of God, but sought the God of blessings, blessed, praised and glorified Him. They sang as

in Rig Veda Khila

यद्वितम्भदेवेश तदाज्ञापयमाधव ।

2. The story of Savitri is related in the Mahābhārata, and beautifully translated by Rückert, and epitomized by Mrs. Manning. A better resurrection than even Christ's! Also Cf. Queen Sita's resurrection from fire.

3. "Be he virtuous or worthless,
many be his days or few,—
Once for all I choose my husband
to that choice will I be true."

[Mrs. Manning]

the youth's life came to an end, and Yama, the Lord of Death abstracted his life away. But Sāvitrī followed Yama's emissaries and dogged them to the very threshold of his council-chamber. Yama, seeing her, grew wroth with his agents for bringing her, and turning to Sāvitrī. "What dost thou want", cried he

Sāvitrī. "I want my husband."

Yama. "Anything except him, please beg."

Sāvitrī. "Then let me have numerous offspring by him."

(Yama was thus bound by his own promise, and was constrained to grant her Satyavān. So, when God is acquired, all else is implied)

Bhag. Vish. Bk. IV, p. 1920. "Ērājum" iv-8-5.

TOPIC 70.

The tenderness of saints' hearts.

The compassionate hearts of saints deplore the fate of men who are turned away from God, and even blame God for not correcting them. Such compassion was once excited in the most tender heart of Kūratt-āzhvān, when, once as he was passing by the way, he saw a frog in the jaws of a snake, croaking most piteously in death-agony. "To what Being doth this frog send its plaintive wail? What Being will hear the agony and come to rescue?" He sighed thus and fainted.¹

[Bhag. Vish. Vol. IV, p. 1960-61. "Nanṇadār" iv-9-1,

1. Cp (a) Madame Guyon's Lines:—

"A thousand sorrows pierce my soul,

To think that all are not thine own.

Ah! be adored from pole to pole,

Where is thy zeal? arise, be known."

(b) Buddha's compassion did similarly find vent when he expired a decrepit old man by the wayside —

TOPIC 71.

Charity in Saints' hearts.

Another story of the Queen of Mercy holding supreme sway in the heart of Kūṛattāzhvān is also related. On the river side of Kāven (Srirangam) a woman had filled her pots with water but there was no one near to help them to her head. Āzhvān noticing it at once helped her (forgetting his high caste, and her lowness).

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. IV, p. 1960. "Naṅṅāḍār" 11-9, 1]

TOPIC 72.

Morbid love of Lucre.

There are worldlings who are so much addicted to Lucre as even to consider their life not worth its purchase. A story is recounted of a man of this kind, who was accused of treason. His hands and legs were lopped off as a punishment. His friends came to condole with him in his dire misfortune. But he consoled them by saying: "Congratulate me, friends! 'tis to your good wishes due, that I have with this much escaped. What would have been me, if instead of my hands and legs, they had demanded me to pay something from my dear money, which is of so much more value to me than my life?" St. Nannāzhvār laments over such men for their ignorance in believing that, not God, but Lucre protects them! ¹

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. IV, p. 1971. "Śāntārum" 11-9, 2,

'But lo' Śikhari's turned
Eyes gleaming with divine tears to
the sky,
Eyes lit with heavenly piety to the
earth
* * * * *
Perchance the Gods have need of
help themselves,

Being so feeble that when and lips
cry
They cannot save."

[Arnold's *Light of Asia*.]

1. Cf. Madame Guyon's Lines —

(a) "Oh! the vain content of man
Dreaming of a good his own,
Arrogating all he can,

TOPIC 71.

Saints' laments cause no annoyance to God: or the music of perpetual prayer.

Saints incessantly think of God, speak of God, call on Him, prefer to him all the sorrows of their spirit &c. With such lovers—because they dun Him as it were—God is not offended. Śittai-kkondar gave the following illustration:—
“The newt (wall lizard) annoyingly tittle-tattles ever and anon. People therefore pay little attention to it. Not so however God, who on the other hand loves His Saints unceasingly tittle-tattling about Him.”¹

Bhag : Viśh. Bk. IV, p. 1977. “Kondāḍunn” is 9.3.]

Though the Lord is good alone—

(b) “Learn, all earth’s that feeble
dumb,

Spring from this terrestrial shell.

Nothing is, and nothing can,

Life and power are all in God.”

(c) “That God alone should prop,

the sicking soul.

Fills them with rage against his
envious pow

I traverse earth in vain from pole
to pole.

To seek one simple heart, set free
from all below.”

(d) अर्थानामार्जनेदुःखं आर्नेतानां चरक्षणे ।

नाशेदुःखं त्रयेदुःखं किमर्थदः सभाजनम् ॥

1 Cp. “, Bh. Gt. ix. 14.

“Unendingly

They chant to Me; seek Me; keep
their vows

Of reverence and love, with change
less faith

Adoring Me.”

(b) Bh. (i, xii-6 to 8

Night and day

Musing on Me—him will I swiftly
lift

Forth from life’s ocean of distress
and death.

Whose soul clings fast to Me. Cling
thou to Me’

Cling Me with heart and mind so
shalt thou dwell

Surely with Me on high.”

(c) Lord Kṛiṣṇa to Gopas:—“But do you know I hate to listen to grumbings, every moment of my existence, and am not in the habit of enumerating my sorrows to others?” (V, xxxviii. Appendix, Vol II. Lord Gaurāṅga by Shishir Karmā Ghose.”

(d) “God—the great pacific loving God, bears the huge sounding-board of space re-echo again and yet again with rough curses on His Name,—with groans and wailings

TOPIC 74.

The pride of the parvenu.

When insignificant man rises to fortune, he becomes vain, and demands respect and homage from all. He wishes to be asked about as "What a great man he (*mudaiyaru*)!"

'Bhag. Vish: Bh. IV, p. 1974 "Kondattum" 11-9-3.

TOPIC 76.

Vile are the ways of the world.

"Oh, the ways of the world!" laments St. Nammāzhvār, See by what unfair means do they hoard Lucre. A good man goes to live in a village. He thinks he ought to place himself under some one's protection that he may live in peace. He goes to the headman of the village and commends himself to his care. The headman seeing that he is a poor harmless soul, but having some money, begins by frightening him thus: "I say my good man I find people herabouts whispering to themselves about thee, they suspect thee they may harm thee.

shouts, tears, laughter and shuddering discord through His everlasting vastness, but amid it all there is a steady strain of music, full, sweet and pure—the music of perpetual Prayer? No science of Prayer? Such science there is that by its power the very ether pairs agunder as by a lightning stroke—the highest gold gateways are unbarred,—and the connecting link 'twixt God and man stretch itself through space, between and round all worlds, defying any force to break the current of its messages." (p. 159. Marie Corelli's *Soul of Lilit*).

1. A man by name Mutia took menial service under a gentleman,

and during 4 or 5 years he served, he learnt all the master's concerns and secrets. He had observed the master burying money under the hearth as a safe hiding-place. The master happened to be absent, when Mutia the menial, quietly excocted the treasure. From that day forward, by degrees, he grew insolent. When his master called him, "Mutia" "what?" he began "am I so contemptible? why can't you call me Muthusāmi," airily. Another time, master "Muthusāmi." "Is that all the title I deserve?" the menial yelled, "why can't you address me as Muthusāmi Mudaliar?"

The poor man is put in dread and asks —“ Have I not trusted thee, Sir ! all these days ? What wilt thou have me do ?” “ Listen !” rejoins the headman, “ if thou hast any money, keep it in my house, if thou hast any land, transfer it to my name. No ill can then be plotted against thee, for thou canst then freely declare thou hast nothing of thine own. In this manner, the good man is by the headman’s artifice caught in a net. Not only this, he dodges the poor man, in addition, into executing a document in his favor for loan not actually paid, and interest is made to accumulate thereon. Thus, to silence the man if he should ever make bold to demand his money and land, some time after, the headman contrives to despatch the poor dupe altogether, fearing that if he lives he may associate with other people and expose his infamy. Oh, the ways of the world ! By what nefarious means do they stuff their stomachs !.”

Bhag. Vish., Bk. IV., p. 1985. “ Marukki ” iv 9-6

TOPIC 76.

3rd Almighty alone can save us.

Pillai Tirunaratrayār Aṅṅaiyar said. “ No one is able to

1 Our holy teacher Śrī Mādhava-
param Śrīnārāyaṇachārya embellish-
ed this by the following tale.

There was a rich man, into whose
favour a wily Vaisya insinuated
himself, and obtained from him a
loan of 4,000 Rupees. The rich man
fell ill, and was on the point of
dying. He could yet talk. He sent
for the Vaisya, to get his money
back but on learning that he could
still use his tongue sent word to
say he would join him soon. In the
meanwhile the rich man lost speech.
The Vaisya was again sent for,
learning he had lost speech, he
now readily came. The rich man,

to friends gathered round him,
showed his four fingers, directing
them towards the Vaisya, as if to
make them understand that the
Vaisya owed him 4,000 Rupees, and
to recover it for him. The astute
Vaisya turned this dumb sign to
his advantage, by addressing with
(crocodile) tears in his eyes
“ Alas, friends ! how I wish this in-
timate friend of mine had lived !
See, he asks you to portion out 4000
Rs to me out of his estate,—the first
thing what he had himself inten-
ded to give me if he had lived.
Note his dying request, pray ; pay
me and let his soul rest in peace !”

disentangle the intricately woven bird's nest. When therefore the Almighty has woven a net about our soul, in due regard to the acts of every one of us, how can one with no back-bone in him, disentangle this net? Only *He* can do it when we clasp His Holy Feet " !

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. IV, p. 1994 " Kāṭhā ' iv-9-8]

TOPIC 77.

The co-operation of God's Free Grace and man's Free Will.

When St. Nammāzhvār asked God why all men should not be saved by His Free Grace; " But man has free will, and I want to see its predilection for Me dawn," answered God. " But even that dilection in the free-will, thou canst generate ", ' pressed the saint. The story of Rishi U'dānka is recited to the effect that after the war of the Mahābhārata terminated, and all the Kuru-race had been extinguished, he happened to meet Lord Kṛishṇa, and questioned —

" What ' As God, are not to Thee, Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas equally bonded as Thy creatures ? How then didst thou take up sides with the former, and allow destruction of the latter ? "

1. Cp. Bk. Gī. v-14

" Hard it is

To pierce that veil divine of vari-
ous shows

Which hideth He; yet they who
worship Me

Pierce it and pass beyond."

Tyndall's marvellous conception of inanimate matter is contained in his expression: ' the form, potency and promise of life ', and Rev Thomas Mitchell says " Behold the marvellous types who in our day are called " advanced scientists,"

possessing the credulous belief in the evolution of all things from nature, but rejecting the prior imputation of these things, which necessitates a creation, and thus a Creator ' All the manifestations of nature may unroll from her bosom, but they were never enrolled within her. They may be uncovered and come out of her, but they were never covered up or put into her. A thing may be taken out of another which did not have it within " " [*Key to Ghostism*, Introd. p. v

Lord :—" Did I not with eternal patience bear up against the sins of the Kurus ? Did I not use every possible means to restore peace between the cousins ? Withal, they persisted in their infernal determination that if their relatives, the Pândus lived and thrived, they would not live and thrive. It is *then*, is it not, that I permitted their destruction ?"

Udañka " But thou art Universal Ruler. Thou couldst have so contrived their wills as to be well-disposed, and so have secured peace ? "

Lord: -" But they have their free-will. I cannot coerce it, but must wait till of its own free-choice, a predilection (or dilection) for Me evolve from it." ¹

[Bhag Vish Vol. IV, p 2007 "Onrum" iv-10-1]

1 For details of the Udañka (or Utañka) episode, see Mahabharata, Aryamedha Parva, Ch 53 ff. This is a difficult question for theology. The following extracts from St. Fr. de Sales's *Treatise on The Love of God* may help to elucidate it :-

" * * the same all-merciful Being desires to recall us to our origin, provided we have the happiness and wisdom not to flee from the arms of Infinite goodness and mercy [p. 45, Ch xviii. Bk. 1]

" Though God designed, in creating them, to leave them a free-will, by which they might choose between good and evil, he also resolved to create them in original justice, that they might have reason to reproach themselves alone if they forfeited eternal glory " [p 66, Ch iv Bk ii.]

" Yes, my God, thou art infinitely good; thou only abandonest those who forsake thee thou wouldst

never withdraw thy graces from us if we were not the first to flee from thee, and refuse thee the dominion of our hearts." [Pp. 72-73, Ch x. Bk. ii].

" Naturalists mention a precious stone, whose brightness is tarnished if poison of any kind come in contact with it. So it is with the soul. No sooner has it consented to mortal sin, of whatever nature it may be, than it instantaneously loses, not only the treasure of grace, but likewise all its beauty and loveliness." [Pp. 142. Ch iv. Bk iv].

" Destruction is thy own, Israel thy help is only in Me " [Osee, xiii-2.]

Reflect also on the words of --
" Ask and it shall be given you seek, and you shall find knock, and it shall be opened to you " [Matt. vii-7].

" The name of our soul with God is sometimes effected without our

TOPIC 78.

The Power of monotheistic Faith.

The most ignorant and illiterate woman in the holy fold of Rāmānuja's faith, knows who is the one only God. For Tripurā-Devī, the wife of Rāja Akāṣakañṭh Āzhvāt, would treat idols of all gods but the one God as no better than stones fit for the hearth (to cook over). Some asked this queen if her conviction was a result arrived at from the authority of Revelation. "Nothing of this kind, I am aware", she rejoined, "what my Saviour Rāmānuja has settled for me is enough. If he should command me that I should worship the deity (Śiva) of the north-east point of the compass (Iṣṭinya) where our waste-water pots are kept, I should worship it.

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. IV, p. 2009. "Onṣum" iv 10-1]

TOPIC 79.

Saints' power of salvation exceeds even that of God.

God's saints take upon themselves the burden of saving

co-operating farther than merely following simply, and without resistance, the divine goodness which attracts us with a view to union—as an infant which delights in reposing on its mother's bosom, but has not sufficient strength to seek it, is very glad when its parent takes it in her arms, and places it on her lap." [P. 255, Ch. II, Bk. vii on love of God].

"As for those who remain buried in the sleep of sin, they have indeed just reason to sigh, groan, and weep: this is the greatest misfortune that could befall them, but they have contemned and rejected the light of grace; they have rendered themselves deaf to the voice of his inspirations; they have hardened

their hearts against its attractions, therefore they (*like the Kuru*) are the sole authors of their own misery—the workers of their ruin and destruction." [P. 151, Ch. v Bk. iv *Ibid*].

Cp. *Brahma Sūtra* *trīṣa prapāṇa* 3c," and its elaborate commentaries on this question of Free Grace and Free-will by Rāmānuja.

In *Bhag. Vish.* Vol. x, p. 4267, it is written:—"When the child cries, "Ma," God answers in the guise of mother in Mother's voice. When it cries "Pa," He answers in the guise of Father in Father's voice."

Read St. Augustine's "City of God" Ch. 6 to 9, Bk. xii.

men whom even God giveth up as hopelessly irretrievable. St. Nammāzhvar ventured on such vocation. A question rose here as to whether God's saints possess such a virtue. To this the story of Upancharavasu¹ is cited.—By a Dishi's curse this saint was consigned to the nether regions, the Pātāla, and there he continued his Vaishṇava practices of devotion as inculcated in the Pāñcharātra Scriptures. The demons of Pātāla, seeing him belonging to the faction of the celestials (Devas), harassed him with their weapons. But as he was a devotee of Viṣṇu, he proved invulnerable to them. The demons sought their chaplain Śakra, and asked him to suggest to them a way how to wound the devotee. Śakra said, "Begin by abstracting his love for Viṣṇu." The demons then put on the disguises of Brāhmanas and insinuated to him, that Viṣṇu, who had neglected him so far, even down to his confinement in the nether regions, could certainly not be worthy of his worship and so on. But all these attempts to rob his love for Viṣṇu proved futile, but on the other hand they excited great compassion in his heart for the demons, at sight of the profundity of their sinfulness which suggested to them even to go to the extent of trying to deprive even saints of their love for God reigning in their hearts, and thereon supplicated Viṣṇu to exhibit his mercy even unto these men. The saint's prayer had immediate effect. The demons turned friends, and were anon taken to Viṣṇu's abode of bliss. Thus the power of salvation vested in God, manifests itself with redoubled vigour in the members of His Holy Church.¹

[Bhag. Viṣṇu Bk. IV, p. 2008. 'Onṛum' IV-10-1]

¹ For an account of this King, [Pratāp Chandra Rev's Edition.] see Mahābhārata, Śānti Parva, Also read Viṣṇu Dharma, Ch. 78, Mokṣha Dharma, Pp: 748 to 758

TOPIC 80.

God alone the Universal Proprietor &c.

The Universal Father is the Only Lord. All others who arrogate to themselves such independence are thieves. The lesser gods are also such. They eat sacrificial food which properly belongs to God, and when the sacrificers seek them with their prayers for boons, they run away like thieves. For these gods but rob from the sacrificers what is God's own, and they have nothing which they can call their own that they can grant. A certain Śrīvaishṇava went to another Śrīvaishṇava's house. Finding the master absent at home, the hungry guest bound his wife fast to a post thinking she would refuse him food in her master's absence. The good huswife, of a pious nature, on the other hand was willing to help the guest with all hospitality even in her Lord's absence. But the guest knew it not, and so he helped himself to food without her and was just about to depart when the master of the house returned and learnt all from his lady. He felt rejoiced that a guest had so honored him, and so ran after to thank him. But the guest mistook his intention, and having acted the thief, his guilty conscience made him run. He was running for fear, and the master was running after him to *thank* him! —So both ran !!!

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. IV, p. 203]. "Nāḍinār" IV-10-2]

1. All the Saviours of the world have done this service to God. The virtue in their work consisted in its purity of purpose, holiness of intent, and absence of self-glorification. The powers of salvation delegated to Holy Saints are stated to be even more efficacious than if God Himself had directly exercised them. Bhāgavata says for example [X.84.11] :—

"Not all the copious waters of

the Sacred Rivers, not all the idols made of mud and stone, but saints alone purify by mere sight. Volumes have been written on the high vocation God's apostles on earth are appointed to fulfil. The wonderful book called the Word-Jewel of Lokāchārya, translated by Yogi S. Pārthasarathī Iyengar, Division 6, on "Teacher's Saving Power" may be read. Also *Ānanda-mūlaka* by Śrī Madhura-kavi. Cp

TOPIC XL.

Immovable Faith in one God.

Firm faith in one only God characterizes True Believers. Ambarīsha's story is related thus in illustration. Viṣṇu Himself, the Universal Lord, resolved to test his steadiness of mind. He put on Indra's disguise, and appeared to him riding on Airāvata, the white Elephant. "Dost thou wish for any boon?" quoth He. Not knowing that it was Viṣṇu Himself riding on Garuda, Ambarīsha disregardingly said —

"Who art thou? and the insect with thee? I am a votary of Him from whom even thou hast obtained thy high position of Indra. I am not a man to do homage to all strollers like thee in the streets. I salute thee, O godling!; from my presence betake thyself away."¹

[Bhag. Viṣṇ. Bk.: IV. p. 2061. "Odyōdī" 11-10-7.]

Jesus' saying "No man cometh unto the Father but by me."

God is the only Proprietor, and all things He owns. Any other, owning, is a thief. The great apostle Paul said "What hast thou that thou hast not received?" Again "And if thou hast received, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"

[1 Cor.: iv-7].

1. Cp.: (a) "Again the devil took him up into a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them," 8 [Matt.: iv-8].

"And said to him. All these will I give thee, if falling down thou wilt adore me" [Ibid. 11-9].

"Then Jesus saith to Him Be gone, Satan: for it is written *The Lord thy God shalt thou adore, and Him only shalt thou serve.*"

[Ibid. 11-10].

(b) The giant Kālanemi, the most powerful of Satan's band, had the audacity to oppose Viṣṇu Himself; but because this Satan had all but *all* things in his possession, he was vanquished. The *five* things are:

पंचतन्माभ्यवर्तन्ति विपरीतेन कर्मणा ।

वेदाधर्मः समासखं श्रीश्वनारायणाश्रया ॥

[Harivamśa 1111-1]

[Trans. on p. 85].

TOPIC 82.

The power of faith in one God.

There was a saint ripe in wisdom, by name Tirumazhisappirān [B. C. 4202—the son of Rishi Bhṛigu].¹ He sat in a temple sewing his old torn-out garments; when Rudra and his wife Pārvatī passed by, but he never paid them any regard. Pārvatī asked her husband.—“How, when thou art so supreme, doth this creature take no notice of us, but sitteth with his legs stretched, in his own nonchalant style?”

Rudra. “He can be no other than Viṣṇu’s devout Worshipper.”

Pārvatī. “Then let us approach him and test.” Thus they both drew near, and asked—

“Who art thou? when mortals see the immortals, it is usual for them to show their submission, follow them, beg and obtain from them boons, and so on. But thy conduct is other wise. Thou dost not even withdraw thy legs, when we are here, as a mark of respect, dost not care to show us honors due to our dignity, nor dost thou pray for gifts.”

Pṛaṇa. “Well said; certainly I would do all that, but could you grant salvation (moksha)?”

Rudra. “Salvation? No; that is out of my jurisdiction. That is only attainable by resorting to Viṣṇu, and too if He grant it out of His grace.”

Pṛaṇa: “Well, canst thou postpone death of creatures from to-day to to-morrow, for example?”

“Because of evil deeds
The five-fold virtues lagged behind.
Vedas and Righteousness,
And Forbearance, and Truth,

And Śrī of Nārāyaṇa.”

3. Read our *Holy Lives of Devotion*
Saints,

Rudra "Oh! that depends also upon the actions of the creatures. I cannot determine it."

Parin "Then, what canst thou do for me? Please, then, decree that this thread which I hold, do follow the needle as I sew. Thus mayst thou be satisfied and go thy way."

Rudra grew wroth at this insult and opened his third eye in the forehead. The saint on seeing this simply pointed him to the innumerable such eyes which he possessed in his leg! "1

[Bhag. Visb. Bk. IV p. 2061 śodiyodī" iv-10-7]

1 Up. (a) ईश्वरादज्ञानमन्विच्छेत् मोक्षमिच्छेज्जनार्दनात् ।

(b) Śrīkaṇṭha in his Bhāṣya on Śrī-Sukta [Edn. 1881. Varā Nilaya Press, Madras] quotes thus —

ऐश्वर्यमिश्वरादिच्छेत् मोक्षमिच्छेज्जनार्दनात् ॥

(c) In Harivamśa 270-31, Rudra (ie Śiva) himself says

मुक्तिपदातासर्वेषां विष्णुर्वनसंशयः ॥

(d) "And call none your father upon earth. For one is your Father who is in Heaven [Matt. xxiii-9].

(e) Paramahansa Rāmakrishṇa's saying 7 [true Brahmaśāstra P. 146 Vol. vi-No 3], — "Be not like Umapādaśa, in thy bigotry. There was a man, who worshipped Śiva but hated all other Deities. One day Śiva appeared to him, and said: 'I shall never be pleased with thee so long as thou hatest.' The man kept silent. After a few days, Śiva again appeared to him. This time he appeared as Hari-Hara, namely, one side of the body was

that of Śiva, the other side that of Viṣṇu. The man was half-pleased and half-displeased. He had his offerings on the side representing Śiva, and did not offer anything to the side representing Viṣṇu. Then Śiva said: "Thy bigotry is unrequirable. I, by assuming I's dual aspect, tried to convince thee that all gods and goddesses are but the various aspects."

(f) For Śaivas interfering with Holy Texts, vide Sūtingupa Rāmānujācārya's Tamil B. 1 Text. for 1900 Pt. note.

TOPIC 83.

Certainty of salvation by pure faith in one Supreme God.

Bhattar was once reading the life of Yayāti.¹ Two good men in the audience, Piḷḷai Viḷhupp-Araiyar and Āppān Tiruvazhundār-Araiyar asked him what chief moral lesson did the life of Yayāti—related in such Traditions (as the Viṣṇu Purāṇa) which are but commentaries on the Vedas—convey ?

Quoth Bhattar :—“ It inculcates this truth, that the lesser gods, when propitiated, grant men their desires, but envy and malice at man's elevation to their status, rankle in their breasts, and they wait for an opportunity to deprive them of that high status ; whereas God, our Universal Father, is never influenced by such passions, for to Him there is no happiness but the happiness of His children. Hence Yayāti's life teaches us the lesson that we must never resort to lesser gods, but trust the One Universal Lord for all our benefactions. Further, do we not learn from Rāmāyana that this Lord, Incarnate as Rāma, with his brother Lakṣmīnara, stood before Viṣṇunra Rishi in suppliant attitude as his humble servants and ready to do his bidding ? ”

The Questioners again :—“ But sire, we learn that in the doings of even this Universal Lord, when incarnate as Kṛṣṇa, his own kinsmen the Yādavas were made to perish by the sea-side, the very reeds and rushes, growing there, turn-

1 (a) Only the highest merit, obtained by trust in One God procures an eternal home in Heaven. But minor degrees of merit such as propitiating minor deities procure only short leases of happiness in the mansions of these lesser beings. For example King Yayāti merited Indra's heaven. But Indra watched for an opportunity

may even conspired one, and then ejecting Yayāti from his abode, threw him down to earth.

(b) Read the following verses of Bhagavad-gīta showing the difference of results between faith in one supreme God, and faith in inferior deities :—ix-22; vii-26, vii-29; with commentaries of Rāmānuja.

[Our English Translation.]

ing into fatal weapons in their hands. How was this?"

Bhattar :—"No stone was left unturned by Lord Kṛṣṇa for the redemption of these graceless people. For their sake the Lord brought from Kubera the Lord of wealth even the Treasures known as Saṅkha Nidhi and Padma Nidhi ¹, and yet Yâdavas deserved to share the fate which they had deserved by their irreclaimable ways."

The Questioners :—"Then it causes us also fear that even our dependence on the one Lord is not destitute of danger."

Bhattar :—"Fear not. The Yâdavas looked upon the Lord, not as God, but as their ordinary companion, a mere skin-relation, a mere blood-kinsman, and therefore this temporary material relation lasted only as long as the temporary body lasted, and then ceased, whereas we rely on the Lord as our eternal and Infinite God, and we claim spiritual relationship with Him through our soul and not the body; our desire also is not for earthly gain but the regaining of the pristine purity of the soul as essentially cor-relate to God, and therefore the fruit that we shall obtain is of the spirit and lasts eternally like the spirit itself."

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. IV. p. 2063. "ôdyôdi" iv 10-7]

TOPIC 31.

Nârâyaṇa—the sole Granter of all good.

Mārkaṇdeya Rishi volunteered a long time to win the

1 Kubera is the Lord of the Nine Great Treasures, called the Padma, Mahā-padma, Saṅkha, Makara, Kacchapa, Makruda, Nanda, Nila and Khartā.

Xavier by often repeating the wisdom :—"For what will it profit a man to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul or what exchange shall a man give for his soul?"

2. St. Ignatius converted the once proud vain-minded St Francis

[Matt : xvi-26].

grace of Rudra, and Rudra pleased with his penances said. "Mārkaṇḍeya¹ like thyself, I myself had to wait on another, greater than myself, in order to win the position which I now hold.¹ Thou hast waited on me so long, I should not send thee away without recommending thee to our Sovereign Nārāyaṇa,² the One God, who shall requite thee for all thy services to me. What I can do for thee is but what the rules of hospitality demand. For when a guest happens to come to our house, the host must offer him food; but if the host happens to have no food, he is bound, by the rules of hospitality, as the next alternative, to guide the hungry guest to a good neighbour's house where he is sure to be fed. (Otherwise the host will sin.)

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. IV. P. 3065. "Pukkaḍimai" iv-10-8].

TOPIC 85.

The ineffable bounty of God's Love and Pardon.

When the profusion and the prodigality, as we may express, of God's mercy begins to rain on us, who could stop it? Embār said that there is a mystical sense conveyed when Lord Rāma, God Incarnate, said to his followers Sugrīva and others with reference to the sworn enemy Rāvaṇa.—

1. (a) Read Bhag. Cf. vii-22:—

सुतयाश्रद्धयायुक्तस्तस्याराधनमोहते ।

लभते च ततः कामान्मयैव निहितान् हृत्वा ॥

(b) Also Brāhma-Sūtra iii-2-37.

फलमत उपपत्तेः ॥

2. Cp शिवश्चनारायणः शक्रश्चनारायणः ।

[Nārāyaṇopaniṣad] vide note 80, p. 146 English. Tatva-traya by Pārthasarathī Yūgi

" The suppliant will I ne'er forsake,
Nor my protecting aid refuse
When one in name of friendship sues.
Though faults and folly blot his brow,
Pity and help he (*Rakṣas*) still may claim."

The sense is that God, while Omniscient, elects to seem as if He be devoid of knowledge; or while remembering all, elects to be forgetful; while Omnipotent, he elects to be incapable.¹ These contrasts are justified thus: When one becomes God's dependent, God blots out of His Omniscience his past sins; and forgets the sins which he may commit unintentionally after his regeneration by knowledge, if by any reason God be obliged to forsake a sinner,—albeit as Omnipotent He could do it,—yet He elects to be incapable of abandoning him.² All this arises from our essential alliance with God, or the eternal bond of relation subsisting between God and soul, as Creator and creature.

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. V. p. 2087, "Kāyâr" 1-1-1].

1. Cp (०) अविज्ञातासहस्रांशुः ॥

[Bhaktîrâya's *Salasa-nama*—Bhaskya.]

(०) "It is commonly and truly said that half the value of a gift depends upon the way in which it is conferred. The generous benefactor dispenses his bounty with such delicacy and grace that, while the benefit is enjoyed, the hand of the benefactor is scarcely felt.* * * The gifts of the Creator . . . are dispensed by an unseen hand, and in such profusion and with such uniformity that the priceless value of each is lost in their multiplicity." P. 18. *The Voice of Creation* by F. C. Oakeley, M. A.]

2. Cp "Does it not even come to ourselves sometimes in prayer, when we have been dwelling long upon some one beautiful attribute of the Divine Nature, to ask ourselves in amazement, how it is that God can possibly forgive sin, and forgiving it, can look so completely as if He had forgotten it all well, and even seem to esteem us more when we rise from a shameful fall, than if we had stood upright in His grace and our integrity all the while." [P. 241. "The Creator and the Creature by F. W. Faber, D. D.]

TOPIC 86.

God's Freedom fettered by His mercy.

St. Nammâzhvâr when he realized the infinite nature of God's Mercy, to which the faithful became heirs, exclaimed — "O Mercy ' thou hast deprived God of the freedom of His just will Safe under the wings of Mercy, no more can God Himself (Mercy's Lord), even of His will, tear Himself away from me for if He can do so I shall still exclaim I am victor, for He must purchase the freedom of His will by denying to Himself Mercy; but which, being *merciful*, he cannot do. A devout lady by name Ariyakal-annmâl visited Lord Varadarâja's shrine (at Kâñchîpuram) on her way back from Vijayanagara. She exclaimed, "God, I have now clasped Thy feet firmly, try if Thou canst spurn me and shake Thyself off from me!"

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. V. p. 2088, "kayâr" v-1 2].

TOPIC 87.

The depth of God's Redeeming love.

Pillaiyanudanâr used to exclaim. "How Great, and Worthy Thou art, O Lord of the discus ' and how vile and unworthy I am " When so exclaiming, he used to raise his arms to Heaven at the first part and drop them down earthward at the second part of this expression.¹

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. V p. 2111, " Annmân. ' v 1-7].

1 Cf. (n) "Not only can the soul that knows its misery have a great confidence in God, but cannot have a true confidence unless it has a knowledge of its misery, for this

knowledge and confession of our misery introduces us to God. Thus all the great saints, Job, David and the rest began their prayers by the acknowledgment of their misery

Purity (or Sincerity) in Love to Jod.

Anasūya (the wife of Atri) congratulated Sitā on her fidelity to her Husband, Lord Rāma, and told her that a true faithful wife was she who looked on her Lord as God Himself. When so complimented, Sitā out of bashfulness and modesty stood with down-cast eyes and quietly gave out that the test of her fidelity was not when she had a husband like Rāma, perfect in beauty as well as graces, but when Rāma should stand without these; when he should be found even the reverse of what He was. ¹

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. V. p. 2211, "Kadīyan" 1-3 5]

and unworthiness; so that it is a most excellent thing to own one's self poor, vile, abject, and unworthy of appearing in the presence of God" [P. 35, Ch. iii Bk. i. "Consoling Thoughts by St. Fr. de Salca.].

(b) This is called *naiṣṭhyanānubhāva*. Cp. the verse by Saint Yammāchārya in his Stotra-Ratna "Tad aham &c." "O Perfection' justify to Thyself the eternal natural affinity between Thyself and Myself, that without me Thou canst not be Lord; that without Thee I cannot be liege."

(c) "The gulf between God and ourselves seems infinite and impassable; yet grace bridges it over, and passes it with a rapidity to which the speed of the electric spark is weary slowness." [P. 254 Ch. v Bk. ii Dr. F. W. Faber's Creator and Creature].

(d) "Without repeated meditations on the Divine Perfections we

cannot fathom the depth of our own nothingness, the horror of our own baseness, the inconceivable pertinacity of our sin * * * Only let us remember, for life is short and there is much to do, that right down through the abysses of our own nothingness lies the shortest road to the contemplation of the Divine Beauty" [P. 261 Ibid.].

(e) "My God and my All! Who art thou, O Sweetest Lord? and who am I, thy servant and a base worm?" [St. Francis Assisi.]

L. (v) Read Rāmāyaṇa Bk. II. Cantos. 117, & 118. *Anasūya to Sitā*

"Those women gau high spheres above
Who still unchanged their husband's love,
Whether they dwell in town or wood,
Whether their hearts be ill or good,
Though wicked, poor, or led away
In lovers' forbidden paths to stray,
The noble matron still will deem

TOPIC 39.

All the godly are to be honored, irrespective of social bearings.

What if they be only our sons? what if they be only our disciples? When they are found embarked on the way to God, they become worthy of worship to all. This truth was acted upon by Kîrattâzhvâr, the father of Kîrattâzhvân. The father lost his wife (i.e. the mother of Âzhvân) and he was thinking of entering again on the married state, but meanwhile a doubt assailed him:—"If I marry again," he thought, "it will not suit my son, as step-mothers are always so, but if I do not marry, it will be against the ordinances of Śâstras which require that one ought either to lead the life of the householder or ought to take up the habit of the monastic order. He cannot hang between. How shall I act now? Shall I please myself or please my son?" After thus deliberating for some time he decided to be on the son's side rather than the side of Ordinances. "I shall thus be more serviceable to him who is making for holiness," he reflected, "than be a slavish stickler to the ordinary rules which prescribe for one's selfish gratification." He thus gave up the idea of taking a new wife.¹

[Bhag. Vish: Bk. V p: 2298. "En ċane" V.5.1].

Her lord a deity supreme."

Btā's reply to Anasān ā:—

"No marvel, best of dancers, thy speech,

The duties of a wife should teach;

Yet I, O lady, also know

Due reverence to my lord to show.

Were he the meanest of the base

Unhonored with a single grace,

My husband still I ne'er would leave

But firm through all to him would cleave."

(¹) This is typical of the parity of love to God, Thomas à Kempis

says:—"He therefore that is not prepared to suffer all things and renounce his own will, to adhere invariably to the will of his Beloved, is unworthy of the name of lover. It is essential to that exalted character to endure the severest labours and the bitterest afflictions, and to let nothing in created nature turn him aside from the supreme and infinite good" [Imitations of Christ. Bk. li-Ch. iv.]

1. Cp: (a) The conversion of Buddha's father and wife, to Bud

TOPIC 91.

God's specific presence in Forms.

St. Nammāzhvār, in his ecstatic moments of Divine Union, declared in transports of rapture how God with all his ineffable radiant beauty entered into him and filled him. One day while Jiyar (Nañjiyar) was on his way to the Temple of Lord Raṅganātha, he met Pillān (Tiruk kurugap-pirān Pillān) and asked him :—

"Holy Sure, is God's omnipresence confined to his essence (*svarūpa*) being present everywhere (*vyapti*), or is He also specially present in His Beautiful Person (*virṅga vyapti*) ?"

Answered Pillān :—"The omnipresence by *essence* is universal, or generic, whereas presence by Person is particular or specific, an act of benign Grace on his part to so become manifest, and a reward to sanctity on man's part. When both grace and sanctity co-operate, the Divine Person of God who abides latent in the heart becomes manifest."¹

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. V. p. 2321. "Nīṇḍavan" v. 57].

form her part of the compact, and cheerfully accept the situation. The fact is, the idea that her sufferings meant the salvation of mankind, gave her a joy which drowned the sorrows that the prospects of a temporary separation from her husband gave her." [P. 95-96, Vol. II Lord Gaurāṅga, by Śigir Kumār Ghosh.]

1. In the works of the Viśiṣṭādvaita Philosophers, three kinds of presence are distinguished: (1) That by essence (*svarūpa*) by which the Universe exists (equivalent to the *Father* of Christianity); (2) that by will (*māheśa*) by which the universal constitution

stands or falls, by which it is willed as eternal or transient (nearly equivalent to the *Son* or *Word* of Christianity), (3) that by Person (*virṅga* or *antaryami* manifest, by which sanctified souls are blessed and deified, nearly equivalent to the *Holy Ghost* of Christianity). The first is *Being* (or) the Root of (2) and (3), (2) is Wisdom (*jñāna*) and (3) is Love (*ānanda*), the Two Attributes of (1) Being. (vide Commentary on *Tatvatraya* on ch. I, 20 "Dhāryam &c.") This is the Mystery of Trinity. The Epiphany, p. 118, July 28, 1900 has very clearly expressed this truth thus.—"God, by virtue of His Divine Immanence,

is present in everything that exists: it is by the power and force of this presence that everything is kept in existence, and if it were withdrawn everything would vanish into non-existence. But over and above this general or Universal Immanence as a force throughout the whole atomic matter which constitutes the basis of the material universe, God has other and higher modes of presence. His presence, for instance, in the human spirit, is much more specialised than His presence in mere matter. Again His indwelling in specially holy or saintly spirits, (e.g. the prophets,) is far closer and more intimate than either of these preceding modes, though it does not supersede them." The *Vināyādharma* further speaks of Incarnations which is a 'manifestation on earth so as to be visibly an Object of love for all men's (freshly) eyes to see' [vide *Rh: I*, with Rāmānuja's commentary p: P, by the Author]. On this point the Epiphany quoted above continues:—"This being so, Christians do not find it difficult to acknowledge, on the authority of revelation, that God can take yet another step forward, and effect a still further heightening or intensification of His presence in a human nature,—even to the extent of constituting Himself its sole Ego (i.e., becoming incarnate, - without thereby withdrawing from any previous method of presence (*ajāta sambhāve, see Gita: Ibid*). Indeed to us it seems the natural and logical outcome of that Divine condescension which first stooped to have a presence in created

nature at all."

'As to Fat, Cit, and Ānande being parallel to the Trinity, consult St. Francis de Sales' *Treatise on Love of God*, pp. 37 & 46 Ch. xv. Bk. I. Also read Dr. Faber's *Creator and Creature*.

As to the ravishment by the Presence of Person which St. Nammālvār says, filled him etc., compare "We shall be transported with happiness at seeing that God gives Himself to us without reserve or limitation on His part, (*āma-dā*) yet that He is an Ahyas which we cannot sound—a source of bliss which we cannot enjoy in proportion to the infinity of His perfectness, which will always be infinitely above the reach of our capacity."

"This vision (called the Beatific Vision, vide *Happiness of Heaven* by Rev: F. J. Henderson) produces two transports of admiration in the blessed; one is excited by the eternal beauty which they contemplate, and the other by their own incapability of penetrating the Ahyas of this infinite loveliness. This is, O God! the happy lot of those who enjoy thy presence: what they behold in thee is wonderful, but what they cannot see is still more admirable." [P. 130 Ch. xv-Bk. III St. Fr. de Sales' *Treatise on Love of God*.]

This Topic has a special reference to The Institution of Image-worship. A remark by Ruskin is here of great value in furnishing thought for reflection to iconoclastic minds:—"Nothing is more wonderful than the depths of meaning which nations in their first days of

TOPIC 92.

Joy with God above all joys.

In the transport of holy joy consequent on communion with God, Saints realize God everywhere, and feel they are like lost and identified with Him. In one of these rapturous states of ecstatic bliss, St. Nammāzhvār exclaimed that he seemed to be all in all in God's Universe which contained Heaven as well as Hell. Jīyar here explained that to one whose end is God, Heaven and Hell make very little difference. For, Heaven and Hell—the one as full of happiness, and the other as full of misery, as to ordinary men appear—are equally despicable to them as compared with God Himself.¹ They would abhor and detest Heaven if there were no God, as welcome and embrace Hell if God were there.

[Bhag. Vish. Bk V. p. 2365, "Kōlaṅgol" v-6-10]

TOPIC 93

Joy over saints' gracious message to men.

St. Nammāzhvār exclaimed "Mighty Lord of the Celes-

thought, like children, can attach to the rudest symbols, and what is to us grotesque or ugly, like a child's doll, can speak to them the loveliest things." "I say this, emphatically, that the tenth part of the expense which is sacrificed in domestic vanities, if not absolutely and meaninglessly lost in domestic discomforts and incumbrances, would, if collectively offered and wisely employed, build a marble church for every town in England."

[P 32. The Seven Lamps of Architecture].

[A most scientific article on the subject may be read in Vol. III.

Brahmavêda Pp. 530 ff.]

Swedenborg says "God is universally and singularly in all things of religion and worship." [P - 10]. "Every one who believes that God is a Man is able to affirm for himself that there are Infinite things in God. For because He is a Man, He has a body, and every thing belonging to the body, thus He has a Face, a Breast, an Abdomen, Loins, Feet. * * * In God-man they are infinite." (Cp. *Sādhana-sāra*) [P 13, Divine Love and Wisdom].

1. Cp. 'If I make my bed in hell, Thou art there'. [Psalms 139-3.]

trials' Thou hast made my heart Thy tabernacle.¹ So intimate and close is Thy union with me, that I beseech thee never more to leave me—me so lovingly clinging to Thee!". The last day² of a course of Holy Festivals, had just been celebrated in Srirāṅgam, when Bhattārya, after getting the place where he lived, watered and rendered cool and agreeable (Srīrāṅgam being a hot place), sat down meditating on that sentiment (above). He requested his disciple Jīyar to sing that verse to him, he himself following him in a heart-melting strain. As Jīyar sang, he feelingly cried—"O joy! that there have been saints like Nammāzhvār born on this earth! saints who have left us such consoling verses as these,—verses which melt our stony hearts!" One may undergo the severest course of discipline and austerity, one may have subdued his senses,—such as those commencing with *Yama*³ &c.,—but the heart inside may remain as hard as steel. Only verses such as these succeed in tempering and liquifying them." Nāñjīyar took delight in often relating this incident to his disciples.

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. V. p. 2410. "*Vand-arūḥ*" 1.7.7]

1 Cp. 'I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever.' [Ps. 61-4]

2 For a definition of *Fama*, *Niyama* &c. and a discourse on the psychology of that process, see pages 35 ff. Part II of our Lectures on Inspiration, Intuition and Ecstasy. Another definition from the work called "*Tuga Vāṇarathā*" is here given. (1) *Yama* is the practice of the virtues of continence, non-injury, non-accepting (gifts &c.), truthfulness in order to bring about the subjugation of the senses. (2) *Niyama* is the higher lesson of the virtues of purity, contentment, and austerity, study of scriptures, and love to God. (3) *Asana* is posture of different kinds, so that

it may help concentration of the mind. (4) *Prāṇāyama*, the practice of regulating breath as per rules laid down, in order to keep the body in good health, (5) *Pratīśānti* is the endeavour to abstract the mind from running out to pleasures of the senses and fix it on God. (6) *Dhyanam* is the intensification of abhorrence for sense-objects and fixate in God. (7) *Dhyāna* is the meditating on God in His Essence, Attributes, Person, the magnificent pageantry of His creation and His acts. (8) *Samādhi* is the continuance of the subjects of meditation, as well at times out of meditation, as in fixed times of meditation.

TOPIC 94

Ecstasy over God's Sovereign Grace.

When Appân Tiruvazhundur Arayar chanted St. Nammâzhvâr's verse "Vandarul" [v 77. T. V. M], he took cymbals in his hands, and while uttering the phrase "Vandarul" he was so overcome by the sentiment conveyed therein that he felt choked and could not proceed further [The meaning of the phrase is—"Out of Thy *sole* Grace, Lord!, Thou vouchsafest to come to me", expressive of the Sovereign love, compassion and sacrifice of the Almighty in approaching the insignificant and mean creature, man, and making his poor heart His tabernacle¹].

[Bhag Vâh. Ek. V. p. 2411. "Vandarul" v 77].

TOPIC 95.

What doth the name of God 'Nectar' imply?

St. Nammâzhvâr, when visiting the Holy Shrine at Tiruk kodandai [Kumbhaghonam], addressed the Lord therein enthroned as "Ârâvamudê", meaning, "O! Nectar Endless." For God alone is such Nectar. The nectar extracted from the churning of the Milky Ocean, is saltwater compared to this,

1 Cp (a) There are brief sweet-nesses in prayer, which come now and then in life like shooting moonbeams through rents on close-packed cloudy nights [Faber's *Creator and Created* p. 408.]

(b) "No wonder God should become man, in order to be with him, or should die for him, in order to save him. No wonder he should abide with him in mute reality in the tabernacle, to feed his soul, and to sustain him and keep alive His creature's love by His own silent

company * * * How He holds His creature in His hand for ever!" [P. 58. Ch. 13, Bk. 1, Dr. F. W. Faber's *Creator and Created*].

(c) Read Lokâhârta's *Taittiriya*, on *Antaryâmi* [Ivara].

2. This single phrase 'Ârâvamudê' (=Inexhaustible Fountain of Bliss) carries much meaning. For its elucidation, we extract the following: "After the desires of our heart shall have been fully satisfied, after they shall have been

To deserve even this saline essence, the conditions required are high birth among the Devas, the practice of rigid chastity &c., and even then, only a little of it is partakable. Not so the Inexhaustible Nectar—God. Every creature is eligible for this Nectar. This Nectar is ever enjoyable. It alone too is the remedy or expiator for all sins of omission in the fulfilment, by man, of the proclaimed will of God (*Śāstra*) as regards his spiritual conduct.

There lived a Saint in the North of India by name Lokasīraṅga-mahamuni. A traveller from the South went there. The Mahāmuni asked. "Son, what tidings there?" Traveller—"There, sire, they have a work called *Tiru-vāy-mozhi*

satiated by the perfect possession of God Himself we shall acknowledge with indescribable joy, that, far from exhausting this infinite source of bliss by beholding and enjoying it, we shall ever have new perfections to discover, all infinitely amiable, infinitely capable of replenishing the heart, but which God alone can comprehend and love, because God alone can understand Himself [P. 139. Ch. xv. Bk. iii. on The Love of God.]

"By sanctifying grace He is incessantly, habitually, powerfully, superabundantly, pouring into us marvellous communications of His divine Nature. Each undulation of it, as it reaches and informs our soul, is a greater miracle than the creation of the universe. One touch, and we pass from darkness to light, one touch and all our eternity is changed. * * * Our souls are made, as it were, a musical instrument, worthy that the hands of God should play upon it.

* * * The impulses of the Divine Will, the pressure of actual grace, is ever varying the music which they draw forth, as the rapid touch of the Creator's hand flies over the many keys of the complex heart of man, and all the while one grace is leading to another in wonderful progression, one the prophecy of what is yet to come, and another the crown of what has gone before, with such a vista of graces in the prospect that no man ever reaches to the term. [Pp. 254-255, Ch. v. Bk. ii. Dr. F. W. Faber's "Creator and Creature"]

"Is there any novelty equal to his daily fresh discoveries in the rich depths of the Divine Perfections?" [Pp. 62. Ch. ii. Bk. i. libd].

3. Cp. Bhāg. Pur. x-13.2 "satam anam," and xii-12-51 "Tad etw rampam." And *Apārā-rod enmayam ādadhayan* [Stotra Ratna].

by St. Nammāzhvār, which all good men there hold in great esteem and veneration."

Mahāmuni.—"Then, pray recite some one verse from that work, if thou dost know."

Traveller :—"I have but learnt one phrase, sire, *viz.*, "Ārāvamudē". Mahāmuni "What! do they have such a sweet Epithet there for the God-head, when there are so many others, ancient ones such as Nārāyaṇa?" So exclaiming, he immediately left for the blessed Land which gave birth to, and which uttered so sweet an epithet. He would not bear to stop in his own land where existed on such sweet name

[Bhag Viśh. Bk. V. p. 2433. "Ārāvamudē" V-8-1]

TOPIC 96

God near and yet far. A tantalizing experience.

St. Nammāzhvār in his enthusiasm to flee to and enjoy, the Lord resident at Tiruvallavāzh, [*vide*, T. V. M. 19] remonstrated with his bosom friends,—who would throw cold water on his attempted scheme to flee to the Holy Land. Jīyar said :—"I experienced like this saint once." After he became the disciple of Bhattārya, he once came from Śrīraṅgam to his own native country Maisūr, and returning, was anxious to be at Śrīraṅgam in time for the Great Festival there. But by the time he reached the North bank of Kāveri near Uttamar Kōvil, the river was unexpectedly in full flood. He could not cross it. All the night through, however, he could sight on the opposite bank the soul-entrancing sights of the Lord's processions, the soul-stirring music in attendance, and other rapturous scenes. But he could not go. What could he do but exclaim in great distress :—"Oh that I cannot be there!" This was how St. Nammāzhvār contemplated the Lord from the outskirts of the Holy Place of Tiruvallavāzh, which he had managed to reach, despite

his objecting friends. Similar was the experience of the three mind-born sons of Brahmâ viz. Ekata, Dvita and Trita who, when they went to Śvetadvîpa, which they found shut against their entrance, had no other alternative but to remain near the outskirts and enjoy the scene and the saintly events such as worshipping Viṣṇu, &c. that were being enacted there,—but in mournful banishment¹ themselves from taking personal part in soul bewitching events.

[Bhag. Viṣṇ. Bk. V. p. 2480 "Mânêy" V-9 I].

TOPIC 97.

That Spot Holy where God has trod

When God incarnates on earth and chooses particular spots thereon as centres for attracting mankind so that they may thus be saved, such spots become so hallowed as even to draw angels down to reside there, and keep company with God. When God incarnated as Lord Râma, one of the Eternals (*mityah*) was born with Him as Lakshmaṇa, and the celestials (*devah*) assumed the Forms of monkeys (and served the Lord as His army &c.); and Terrestrials—who were Godward bent—like (the giant-class) Vibhīṣhaṇa, became the Lord's followers

L. The story is related in the Mahābhārata, Śānti Parva, Mokṣan Dharma, Chapters 133 to 137 in extenso. An extract would suffice here—"On the northern shore of the Ocean of Milk there is an island of great splendour called by the name of White Island. The men that inhabit that island have complexions as white as the rays of the Moon and who are devoted to Nārāyaṇa. * * * Eagerly desirous of beholding Him and our hearts full of Him, we

arrived at last at that large island called White Island. Arrived there we could see nothing. Indeed, our vision was blinded. * * * 'Go hence, ye Munis, to the place whence ye have come! That Great Deity is incapable of being ever seen by one that is destitute of devotion.' [P 753 B. Pratāp Chandra Ray's Edition]. Also read the excursion of Rāvaṇa into these Islands and his discomfiture there in Uttara Rāmāyaṇa 5th Sarga (Adhika-pāthe).

and dependents. The angels even dwelt like trees, rocks and shrubs in such Holy Spots, lest, if they were moveable things, their free-wills might perchance incline them to stray away from their Lord. It is recorded here that in the days of Embâr, one Jananâtha-Brahma-râya a disciple, ordered trees being felled at the upper part of the island of Śrīraṅgam where the two branches of the River Kâveri (Kâveri and Kouadam) divide. On hearing this, Embâr .—

“What ‘Allâḥap-perumâḥ’ (nickname of Râyar) you go and ruin God’s creation?”

Râyar with a view to elicit some more interesting discourse from Embâr, replied :—

“Sure, is there a place in the universe where God’s creation is not?” Embâr .—“Not so my friend! There is a distinction between places in general and places which, in particular, God has chosen for His own dwelling-place. The groves immediately surrounding such holy spots are like the hand garden of a great King, who Himself with His Royal consort, waters and tends them, who therefore have touched the sacred trees with their own hands. (The sacred groves, which ever cling to and never move from the Holy spots, are like the eternals who never separate from God).

[Bhag. Viśh. Bk. V. p. 2488 “Mânēy” v-9-1]

TOPIC 98.

Conformity to God’s will preferable.

‘Let Thy will be done, not mine’, characterizes all saints who have entirely surrendered their will to the dispensations of Providence.¹ It is, as an illustration of this, recorded that

¹ Cp (a) ‘Father, if thou wilt, remove this chalice from me. But yet not my will, but thine be done.’

[Luke xxi-42].

(b) ‘I delight to do thy will, O my God. [Ps xl-8.]

Kûrattâzhvân's impatience to leave this world, and ascend to the spiritual realms of the blessed, became so vehement that he went to Lord Ranganâtha, and preferred to him his intention, after praying to Him most fervently. The Lord condescended to say — "Within three days, thou shalt have thy discharge." Âzhvân was joyed, left the premises of the Holy Sanctuary (within which he dwelt) and went out of the ramparts in happy anticipation of death. Râmânuja, (Âzhvân's Guru) came to know this, and running to his disciple asked — "Alas, Âzhvân! how canst thou have thought of soaring to the Blessed Regions when I am still here?."

Âzhvân "Excuse me, sire, I forgot all about this in the depth of my weariness for this world." Soliloquizing to himself thus "Then I shall also repair to the Lord, and submit my prayer to Him as well, supplicating Him to change His mind so as to allow of Âzhvân remaining on earth for some time longer," Râmânuja went as far as the outer door of Raṅganâtha's Sanctum; but checking himself suddenly, he stopped and said to himself: "No; I ought not to meddle with God's will, once it has been formed. Let His will be done; let me not be the instrument of interfering with it" ¹. So saying he returned, changing his first resolve, formed through his love for Âzhvân.

[Bhag: Vish: Bk. V, p. 2527. "Piranda" v-10]

1. Up (a) "Râma ne'er makes
his promise twice"

[Râmâyana ii-18-30]

- (b) "The suppliant will I ne'er
forsake"

[Ibid VI 18-3.]

- (c) "Bound by a solemn vow I
swear

That all my saving help should

share

Who sought me in distress and
cried,

"Thou art my hope, and none be-
side'."

[Ibid VI 18-34.]

- (d) "Thou shalt not tempt the
Lord thy God"

[Deut 6-16]

TOPIC 99.

A reason for saints' partiality to Krishna Avatār.

Bhattachāryas' disciples asked him once: "How is it Lord, that all the Āzhvārs (saints) have showed a preference for God as Lord Kṛishṇa, not as Lord Rāma or any other Incarnation?" Bhattachārya satisfied the query thus:—"When a man is subjected to bereavement from his loved ones, the grief caused thereby decreases as time elapses, when it is fresh, its pangs are acute. So to the Āzhvārs, Lord Kṛishṇa's Avatār is nearest to them in time, i.e. more recent than all the other Avatāras. Hence their lamentations were great. St. Nammāzhvār who was born just forty five days after the Ascension of Lord Kṛishṇa, groaned thus from love: "Sinful man that I am, I have been born six weeks late! Ah! that what had reached the lip (i.e., Kṛishṇa) hath slipped away!"

[Bhag Vish Bk. V. p. 2528. "Pīṇḍa" v. 10].

TOPIC 100.

The story of the mission of Buddha.

St. Nammāzhvār refers to the Avatāra of Buddha as a mask put on by Viṣṇu in order to sow the seeds of doubt, dissension and heresy amongst unbelievers (as a chastisement for their folly, and subsequent redemption). The story of Buddha is recorded thus:—"Once upon a time, the demon hosts (*asurik*) invoked Rudra by their rigorous austerities. Rudra appeared and asked them why they did the penance and what they wanted. They said they desired to possess three cities, foe-proof. Rudra granted their request, but warned that the three cities should always travel in the air without touching each other, but if they did ever chance to collide, great misfortune should overtake the demons. "Take care", warned he. Forthwith, three cities came into existence. One was made

of iron, another of silver, and the third of gold¹. The demons lived there and waged war against the Devas (lower angels) and the Brāhmaṇas on earth who offered libations to them. When sacrifices to the Devas were thus obstructed, the Devas began to lose their strength, and found themselves able neither to vanquish the demons nor even to approach the precincts of the Three Cities. Then all the Deva-hosts with their Patriarch Brahmā repaired to Rudra and complained to him that they were deprived of their sacrificial offerings, that the demons travelled with their cities, posted themselves at all places where sacrifices were performed, molested and killed the performers, and asked him therefore to destroy them.

Rudra said "Who would fell a tree planted by himself even if it be a poisonous tree? I cannot do it." Then the Devas next betook themselves to the Milky Ocean (*kshīrabdhī*)*, and loudly sued to the Lord there (Mahā-Vishṇu) for relief. The Lord of the Universe appeared, riding on the Vedic Bird Garuda, and asked them their business. They narrated to him all the story, and begged of him to destroy the demons.

Vishṇu. "Could you not all join together and do it?"

"No," said the Devas, "the demons also do perform some acts of virtue and sacrifices, having faith in their efficacy to bring reward. Hence these acts stand in our way to destroy them."

"Then," commanded Vishṇu, "go back to your places, and I shall destroy them." He forthwith put on the disguise of an aged Buddha (wise man), carried a book under his arm, twisted *kusa* grass round his finger, and proceeded to the cities

1 For an account, read Yajur-Veda: vi-3-16.

2. Esoterically, it means the

channeled heart where God is realized, Read Maṭrāyaṇi Uṇ. 7-9 for Buddha. (Cf. note c. p. 118.)

of the demons; and there preached to them morals in such a manner that they were taken in and adopted him as their moral adviser. But when they began performing some Yâgacemonies, Buddha approached: "What do ye do", he asked. "We are about to perform a Yâga," said they. "What are these sticks for?", Buddha asked. "For offering into the fire", said they. Buddha:—"Better to be born a grass-eating cow than a stick-eating fire. What are these food-offerings for again?" "For the Devas," said the demons. Buddha. "Indeed it would be good sense to offer thus, if it be good sense that a traveller's hunger be satisfied by the food eaten by another staying at home! It is thus ye hope to derive benefits in return for the food offered to the Devas." "Well, next, what are these goats for?" "To extract the omentum from them and offer to the Gods," said they. "Oh then", Buddha said, "butchers are righteous people, they are!" By such preachings, the demons were cajoled. Their belief in the efficacy of sacrifices was shaken, and they gave them up. They even began to revile Rudra. Buddha then betook himself to Rudra: "Dost thou see, the demons revile thee?", said he. Rudra thereon waxed wroth, and resolved to destroy the ungrateful demons. Battle ensued. The Earth became the car, the mountain Mahâ-Meru became the bow, the Lord Vishnu the arrow, and Rudra, with such helps, exterminated the *vile* demons. Order was then restored, and the Devas were provided as heretofore with their sacrificial offerings by the Brâhmanas, &c." ¹

[Bhag: Vish. Bk. V. p. 2550. "Kaṣṭha-vedam" v-10-4].

1. (a) Read Vishnu Purâṇa. III-18, and Jâhâli's atheistical speech to Lord Rama [Râmâyâṇa. II-108] to which Rama angrily replied: "My father's thoughtless act I chide

That gave thee honored place,
Whose soul from virtue turned
aside,
Is faithless, dark and base.

TOPIC 101.

Martyrdom for one's own God.

Except the one God, all other gods are simply gods on sufferance. None of them can do anything save the one God indwelling them and using them as His instruments. What instruments God chooses, whether animate or inanimate, it makes no difference. Rudra performs one such function: that of the Destroying Angel, by order of the Supreme, in the cosmic economy. In the old days, a cruel ruler of the land wrote on a scroll "Rudra is the supreme Truth", and commanded all to subscribe to the declaration. Many obeyed. But the sage Āzhvān, brought to that Ruler's presence by compulsion addressed him thus: "Come, king, listen; if thou couldst possibly preserve this scroll against all time's destruction, then thou mightst take pride that what is written thereon could also be proof to destruction. But the God that thou thinkest as supreme is solely so by virtue of such power invested in him by the Lord Paramount of the Kosmos. So do Authoritative Scriptures declare. Now, this day, because thou constrainest me so to do, I might sign in thy scroll, but to-morrow what if a wise man be born and he put me down for a fool!? Rather than face such opprobrium by all the coming generations, I should submit to whatever inquisitorial torture thou mightst subject me to, rather than comply with thy order."

[Bhag: Vish Bk. V. p. 2553—4 "Kaṭṭa-vēdam" 1-10-4]

We rank the Buddhist with the thief

And all the impious crew
Who share his sinful disbelief,
And hate the right and true."

(a) Cp: "As he (creature) did not make himself, so neither can he give himself his own vocation."

[Dr: P. W. Faber's *Creator and Creature*, p. 56, Ch. II, Bk I].

(c) This Buddha should not be confounded with Sākya Muni of B. C. 66. [Read Col Olcott's *Diary Leaves in Theosophist* for Oct 1903].

1 Cp. "Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice's sake; for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven" [Matt 5-10].

TOPIC 102.

God's readiness to meet His devotees.

What will not God do for those who give their hearts to Him? A certain devotee of the North proficient in singing, was longing to visit Lord Rāṅganātha (Śrīraṅgam in the South). He came all the way—On the closing day of a certain festival, during night, Āzhvār Tiruvārāṅga pperumāḷ Arāyār—the conductor of the Temple choir—chanted the Hymnal called Tirumāḷai [by Saint Bhaktānḡbri-regu or Tondaraḍippod, Āzhvār-45 verses],¹ to his heart's content, applauded the Lord in the manner that mabouts sing flattering songs in order to tame rutting elephants. The Lord was highly pleased and was in a humour to do the Arāyār's bidding. 'Lord', he submitted, 'a hearty votary of Thy Holy Feet has traveled all the way from the North—a distance of seven hundred leagues—to visit Thee. Wilt Thou not condescend to honor him with a special recognition of his love for Thee?'. "Certainly" vouchsafed the Lord, and from the Holy Laurel tree [மரம்] in the cloisters of the Temple, the Lord walked forward four rods' length in the hands of His Holy Bearers; and addressing the Holy Choir said.—"Come My Holy Chanters! Is what We have done adequate to the pains taken by this Northern supplicant of Ours?" This tradition illustrates how far God is prepared to approach us when we will but take one step towards him.²

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. V. p. 2559. "Nirṇayāḥṛum" 5-10-6]

1. Read our *Holy Lives of Devotees of Saints*.

2. Cp.—(a) "The love of the devotee for his Lord is but a faint reflection of the love of Him who is love itself. It is said that if a child throws a pebble to the ground, the whole great earth moves towards

the pebble as well as draws the pebble to itself, attraction cannot be one-sided. In the spiritual world when man makes one step towards God, God makes a hundred steps towards man, for greatness there, means greatness in giving, and the ocean pours forth its mea-

TOPIC 103.

Saints—Gods on earth.

Saints are gods on earth. They intercede for us with God. Nāñjiyar used to say: "Whenever I saw a saint, a devotee of Vishnu, and I fell at his feet with my head touching them, I felt as if I ate my fill, as if my hunger vanished."¹

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. VI, p. 2597 "kādai" vi : 2.]

TOPIC 104.

Ecstasy or docology? An irrelevant question.

Tiruvurunda-varai-mārvan was a disciple of Bhattārya. A friend of his, by name Piḷḷai-aramudanār, asked him, "How did your Bhattar explain to you the import of the phrase "

sureless depths towards any drop that seeks its bosom." ["The Value of Devotion" by Annie Besant, p. 267. *Theos. Review* for May 1906.]

(b) Read Bh. Gīt. vii-16 to 18 with commentaries thereon, by the Author.

(c) "He (the Creator, the King of kings) bursts forth all divinely into triumph, because a half-converted sinner has condescended to accept his grace. He bids the angels rejoice, and hold high feast through all the Empyrean Heaves, not because He has evolved some new and wonder-stirring system out of nothing, not because He has called into being some million-worlded nebula, and cast upon it such an effulgence of His beauty as throws all the rest of His creation into the shade,—but because one wretched, unworthy, offensive man has, after an immense amount of divine eloquence and pleading, con-

scended to take the first step towards not being damned, one outcaste of human society, who has drunk his fill of every vice has graciously condescended, for fear of hell, to accept heaven!" [The Creator and Creature. Ch. v Bk. II. p. 264. by Dr. F. W. Faber].

Cp. the joy of the celestials when a soul from the nether regions goes to them via Archurādi; and God counting that as the highest of services rendered to Him, that of His missionaries saving but one soul.

Cp. 1. "It may be freely admitted that the sentiment of reverence is really homogeneous, whether it be directed upon simply human excellence far above our own or upon the highest of all in the absolutely perfect. It was not without a true feeling that the Latins covered by the single word *pietas* the venerating affection whence springs the right attitude towards superi-

Wherein, thus, he made an invidious distinction between his *own sons* and his brother's sons the Pāṇḍavas, shewing that the notion of "mine" reigned supreme in his heart. Śrīyāttān used to say that this distinction of 'mine' and "not mine" eventually led to the destruction of Dhritarāshtra's race.¹

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. VI p. 2660. "Munnidai" vi 2 1].

TOPIC 106.

Secrets between God and His Saints.

God has secrets with his saints. Saint Namagzhvār, in his extatic intercourse with God, exclaimed :—" Lord, sportest Thou with me by telling me of secrets (of previous union) ? " On this, a few disciples asked Embār " What are the secrets, Sire, which the Lord spoke to the Saint ? He replied — " When the Saint himself who was illumined of God, has pronounced them as *secrets*, how can ye expect me to know them ? "

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. VI : p. 2698. "Karmam" vi-2-7].

1 (a) Cp " He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that shall lose his life for me shall find it."

[Matt x-39]

(b) The love of self is more hurtful to the soul than the united power of the world. [P. 231, Ch xx. Bk. iii. Imiṭ: Cār: by Tho: à Kempis]

2. Cp (a) "Divulge not such a love as mine,

Ah! hide the mystery divine;
Lest man, who deems my glory
shame,

Should learn the secret of my
flame "

[Madame Guyon.]

(b) "In sylvan scenes and caverns rude,

I taste the sweets of solitude,

Retired indeed, but not alone,

I share them with a spouse unknown

Who hides me here from curious eyes

From all intrusion and surprise."

[Ibid].

(c) " He (St. Francis Assisi) with fear disclosed to them this wonderful vision, but added that several things had been manifested to him in it, which he would never discover to any one, secrets, says St. Bonaventure, which perhaps could

TOPIC 107.

The sports of Lord Krishna-

The shepherdesses of Brindāvan came to Yāsoda, Lord Krishna's mother, complaining to her that their butter was stolen by some one. On hearing this, Child Krishna would immediately cry as if to plead that *he* did not steal, thus by his own unbidden cry betraying himself as the Urchin Thief (This is one of the many infant sports of the Lord) ¹ It appears that once the residents of Rāmānuja's monastery asked among themselves as to who should clean and water the monastery. They decided that the unlearned among them should be detailed for this menial service. He who was the unlearned among them immediately cried (though no body said he was the unlearned). "Sirs, how can I clean so big a place as this?!"

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. VI. p. 2720 "Āyichhi" vi-2-11.]

not be expressed by words, or which men, who are not supernaturally enlightened, are not capable of understanding." [P. 136 vol. x. Butler's Lives of Saints].

(d) *Things have passed between us; secret relationships are established, food ties are knitted, thrilling endearments have been exchanged, there are memories of forgiveness full of tenderness, and memories of punishments even yet more full of sweetness and of love, there have been words said, which could never mean to others what they meant to us, there have been works which needed not words and were more than words; there have been promises of the hand years ago, but which tangle yet; there are countless silent covenants between us and with it all, such a

conviction of his fidelity 'so that it is true to each one of us beyond our neighbours' [Dr F W Faber's *Creator and Creature*, p-80].

1 Vide Topic 16 and its foot notes. In addition to the vituperations of all the Christian Missionaries born, against the character of Lord Krishna the Calcutta weekly called the Epiphany has now taken the field. As against this the reader is referred to the splendid 'Defence of Hinduism' by Annie Besant in the central Hindu College Magazine Vol I. Col. Kennedy's Defence of the Puranas in Wilson's *Vishnu Purana*; and Griffith's notes in his *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa*. In the Bible itself, God does acts such as 'the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth &c.'

[1 Kings xxii-23].

TOPIC 108.

To Saints, all things remind of God.

There is nothing in God's Universe which to a saint looks worthy of hate. For to him God is everywhere, and every thing of His Universe is worthy of love. It is chronicled here that once two sages Śrī Śeṇāpati Dâsar and Nallâr both traveled together to the Holy Hill of Tirupati. On the way Dâsar took up his stick and beat the bushes (to clear the way). Upon which his friend Nallâr said.—“Comrade, how hath this bush offended thee? Neither hath it stood in the way of thy earning riches, nor of thy compassing for other selfish ends. (Wealth and lust beget hate and other evils). Why then dost thou punish this innocent God's bush?”

[Bhag Vish: Bk. VI. p. 2734. “Kandavmbam” vi 3-2]

TOPIC 109.

How to embrace the infinite.

In the vehemence of his love for God, and the exuberance of his rapturous union with Him, St Nammâzhvâr felt so much

L. (a) “All scenes alike engaging
prove

To souls impressed with sacred love!
Where'er they dwell, they dwell in
Thee;

In heaven, in earth or on the sea.”
[Madame Guyon].

(b) “Ev I I have none to fear,
All is good if Thou art near.”

[Ibid].

(c) “Every event in history
every aspect of nature, and above
all, every miracle, reminds them of
the power of God.”

[P: 125, The Psychology of the
Saints by H. Joly].

(d) “And hence appears the
vanity of that man who loves crea-
tures, and attaches himself to them,
instead of only loving the Creator
in them.” [The spiritual combat,
by Father Lorenzo Scupoli. P. 191].

ॐ नवाभरेदयुःकामायपतिःप्रियोभवति,आत्मनस्तुकाशाय.

[Bri. Up: II-2-5].

accession of power pulsating through his being that it made him to exclaim,—“By the strength of my (love inspired) tongue, I can catch and put to confusion this cloud-hued God of Discus and Conch.”¹ Bhattārya was discoursing on this passage, when one of his disciples in the audience by name Van-ḍuvaraiṭ-Perumāl of Kaṣṇanūr queried thus,—“Was it not enough to have said “I could by my tongue put the cloud-hued God to confusion? Why was it necessary to have added the attributes of Discus and Conch?” To which Bhattar replied:—“(Discus and Conch typify time and space, or Infinity and Immensity, so that by no means is it possible to enclose and entrap a God of this nature, but a Saints’ love by its prodigality, if it may be so said, exceeds even these limits, so that by that comprehending love, even God, though he be infinite is encompassable). A God of time and space is like a wayward Elephant, (the Lord of the forest) roaming at liberty unrestrained and unchecked. ‘Even this Elephant, I will restrain and curb; even this Unchangeable, I will change,’ is what the Saint wishes to tell us,” by these attributes.

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. VI. p. 2686. “Katakka” vi § 9].

TOPIC 110.

Saints fitted for Jod alone, miracles no wonder.

Such is the family of saints that every member of it necessarily goes in quest of God, and till He becomes possessed of Him,

1 On what Conch and Discus signify, See Yogi Pārthāsārathi Aiyangar’s *Tatva-traya*, p. 118 to 121 and Appendix II thereto, pp. 223-234; and his English Translation of *Mukunda-Mālā*, Foot notes, pp. 3 and 4:—“Thus our God’s Discus and Conch, show Him to be the Lord of two Angels who sur-

perintend all we observe in the universe, viz., *matter* (more or less enormous) in *motion*. Matter and motion, are, for mathematical purposes, called space and time, which mutually serve to measure each other; for as A. Humboldt well observes, “we measure space by time, and time by space.” &c., &c.

nothing will stop his progress on the way. Saints are as it were made for God, manufactured for God and destined for God. This high destiny and their aim, none and nothing can avert.¹ To illustrate how this destiny is by necessity fulfilled, the episode of Naja the monkey-chief (a grown saint from ages) is related. His comrade-monkeys expressed to him their great doubt as to the possibility of constructing a viaduct across the ocean by means of great rocks, boulders and whole hills brought *en masse* and rolled! "Colleagues!" he retorted, "Do you think it possible that the Lord of the universe, Râma, can be a hermit in the forests? Is it possible that His Consort—the Mother of the universe—can be carried away by the Demon Râvaṇa? Is it possible that a universal Lord (Râma) can cry like a weak person for His lost Consort? And yet, if you have in faith received these events, you need have no surprise for a bridge of hills thrown across a sea! (He who can make mountains rise, seas dry, and construct a universe, can certainly do this bit of a miracle to confound the brains of men!)"

[Bhag. Vish : Bk. VI, p. 2796. "Tuvajil" vi-5-1].

1 Cp. (a) "For whom He fore-knew He also predestinated to be made conformable to the image of His Son."

[Rom. viii-29].

(b) "The destiny of great men is decreed by a law inscribed by fate upon their temperaments, circumstances or surroundings."

[P. 27, H. Joly's *Psychology of the Saints*].

2. Rom. Rāmāyaṇa vi-21-45#.—

(a) "Then upake the king of brooks and seas

To Raghu's son in words like these
'Now let a wondrous task be done
By Naja, Vīśvakarma's son,

Who, born of one of Vānar race,
Inherits by his father's grace
A share of his celestial art.
Call Naja to perform his part,
And he, divinely taught and skilled
A bridge athwart the sea shall build.'
"He spoke and vanished; Naja, best
of Vānar chiefs, the King address-
ed :

"O'er the deep sea where monsters play

A bridge, O Râma, will I lay;
For sharer of my father's skill,
Mine is the power and mine the will."

(b) Here is a quotation of Miracles.
If by Moses' hand the sea can part

TOPIC 111.

The perpetual growth of Saints' love for God.

The phrase used by St. Nammāzhvār to express his ineffable love for God in [Tiruvāimozhi VI 5 : 1] "Tuvall" is துவல் (Ninnu kumirumu). This phrase can be split into *ninnu kumirumu*, or *ninnu nāṇu irumu*. In the court of king Vikramasimha, linguists (to parade their learning) wisely suggested the division *ninnu*, *irumu*, meaning that in his love for God, our saint would *melt* and *die*. But the king opposed this, and opined that *kumirumu* meaning *whirling* was more appropriate. "For" said he, "*melting* and *dying* imply an *end* to the love, whereas for a saint of Nammāzhvār's type, it is more appropriate to consider his love as unceasingly *whirling* like the whirlpool in a stream, boring deeper and

[Vide Exodus II-31] the Architect of the Universe Incarnated, can certainly be the Engineer of a trifling stone-bridge over the waves."

"Certain critics of this age, as they style themselves, are displeased with all histories of miracles, not considering that these wonders are, in a particular manner, the works of God, intended to raise our attention to His Holy Providence, and to awake our souls to praise His goodness and power; often also to bear testimony to His truth."

[P 24, Vol. I Introductory Discourse, Butler's Lives of Saints].

(c) Says Mr. T H Griffith, M. A., O. I. E. [notes, 562-3 of his Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa] "How could an epic so dear in India to the memory of the people, so deeply rooted for many centuries in the minds of all, so propagated and diffused

through all the dialects and languages of those regions, which had become the source of many dramas which are still represented in India, which is itself represented every year with such magnificence, in such crowds of people in the neighbourhood of Ayodhya, a poem welcomed at its very birth with such favor as the legend relates that the recitation of it by the first wandering Rhapsodists has consecrated and made famous all the places celebrated by them, and where Rāma made a shorter or longer stay, how I ask, could such an epic have been purely allegorical? How upon a pure invention, upon a single allegory, could a poem have been composed of about 50,000 verses, relating with such force and power the events, and giving details with such exactness?"

deeper, but never scattering and passing away. This circling and boring of love in the heart is mute, silent and incapable of expression, like the cow, whose calf is tethered away from her and whose teats tingle with filling milk, cannot withal express by mouth her painful longing to reach her calf." (To *welt* and *die* would put limits on the saint's love, whereas to *whirl* would make it perpetual and ever to grow)¹

[Bhag Vish Bk. VI p. 2304. "Tuvali" vi 5-1]

TOPIC 112.

The Bewitching Beauty of God.

When St. Ālavandār (Yamunāchārya)² heard from Maṇak-kāl Nambī the discourse about God, he said :—"There is no other way but God (to salvation). How can I see Him im-

1 Cp (a) "Flames of encircling love invest,	deathless fire,
And pierce it sweetly through ;	Its object heavenly, it must ever blaze
'Tis filled with sacred joy, yet press'd	Eternal love a God must needs inspire,
With sacred sorrow too."	When once he wins the heart, and fits it for his prize,"

[Madama Guyon].

(b) "Love pure and holy is a

[Ibid].

(c) तदेवम्यंरुचिरंनवनं

तदेवम्यंश्चन्मनसोमहोत्सवम् ।

तदेवशोकार्णवशेषनृणां

यदुत्तमश्लोकयशोनुमीयते || [Bhāg XII, 12-51]

2 For a detailed life of this King Saint, see Awakened India, Vol II 1937, p. 28 ff, 41 ff & 55 ff. The extract bearing on the present topic runs as follows: "So he (Ālavandār) eagerly asked Nambī

where that Treasure lay and how he might obtain it. Nambī replied, "I will show it to you if you go with me. It is between two rivers and within seven successive walls. A huge serpent guards it and a

mediatly?"! God has but to be told, and the heart yearns to see Him. He has but to be seen; and it maketh one weep with tears of joy like St. Nammaṅḍavār.¹

[Bhag Vish: Bk. VI. P. 2816: "Kuzhanyum" VI-5-5].

TOPIC 113.

How God is glorified by praise.

Gods' glory gains color when it is sung with inimitable fervour by His beloved saints, as when Saint Bhattārya did sweetly ejaculate the Holy Name "Azhagia-manavālap-Pertunāḷ"—"Lovely Spouse"; as when Sīmāṣay-āṇḍān did intone the Holy name, "Emberumḷṇār"—"My own Lord (an epithet of

Rākhaṣa from the south sea comes and visits it once in twelve years. It has been laid in by a *mantra* and it can be recovered only by means of that secret *mantra* and with the help of a peculiar herb of rare virtues, and not by means of mere animal sacrifices like other ordinary treasures. It is a very vast Treasure and by obtaining it you will become much richer than any other thing on earth. By securing it you can easily vanquish all your enemies, and no one can ever defeat you. It is a great legacy which your celebrated grand-father Nāthamuni Svāmī has left you out of love. Pray take hold of it and deliver me from my responsibility." Ālavandār asked "Is it so valuable and vast a Treasure?" And said, "How good of my grand-father! and how good of you not to have appropriated it yourself but kept the Trust! I shall start immediately with my army." [P 43.] Also see the Vaiṣṇavarīto Vol I

1. Cp. (a) Oh Thou, once beheld, we ne'er forget

Reveal Thy love, and banish all my fears."

Madame Guyon].

(b) "Devotion to Divine Men is not a matter for dispensation or for argument; the moment One of Them is seen by the inner vision, the heart rushes out to Him and falls unbidden at His Feet."

[P 276. Theos Rev The Value of Devotion by Annie Romant.]

(c) "The attractions of the Incarnated Beauty, and eternal goodness, are infinitely sweet and amiable, yet at the same time they are so powerful, efficacious, and so completely engage the attention of the mind, that they seem not only to fascinate, but even to ravish, and carry the soul beyond her natural limits. [P 262. Ch. ix Bk. vii, St. Fr de Sales's Love of God]

Rāmānuja)", as when Anandāzhvār did anthem the Holy Name "Tiru vēngarāṇ udaiyān " the Lord of the Holy Hill of Tirupati.¹

[Bhag Vish Bk. VI. P. 2822 "Annaimr" vi-5-7].

TEPIC 114.

A love-comparison between two saints.

Saint Ālavandār, when conducting an exposition of the relative merits of Saint Nammāzhvār and Saint Tiru-maṅgaiy-Āzhvār, in the sphere of Love to God, asked his audience 'Which of these two saints have we more cause to fear, the saint who sang 'Thou, Lord, art my food &c.' [T V M vi 7] or the saint who sang. "O, the Thief, He hath stolen my soul away" [Tirumozhi iii-7] ?'. They replied :—"Certainly we have to fear for the former viz., Saint Nammāzhvār for his state is one of precipitate flight, alone and *companionless*, to the shrine of Tirukkōlūr, where he hopes to meet His Lord whereas the latter, viz., Saint Tirumaṅgaiy-Āzhvār is already in *company* with his Lord of Tiruvāṭ. Our sympathies must be certainly with those who are still lonely, not with those who have found company with God." "But I think otherwise, Sons!", Returned Ālavandār, "My opinion is that we have more reason to fear for the state in which we find Tirumaṅgaiy-Āzhvār. For here the lover and his Spouse are in *company*. Thus they are delin-

1. Cp. (a) "He (St. Francis Assisi) was accustomed to recite our Lord's Prayer very slowly with singular gusto in each petition, and in every word. The doxology *Glory be to the Father &c.*, was a beloved aspiration of this saint, who would repeat it often together at work, and at other times, with extraor-

dinary devotion, and he advised others to use the same. A certain lay-brother once asking him leave to study the saint said to him "Repeat assiduously the doxology, *Glory be to the Father &c.*, and you will become very learned in the eyes of God." [Vol X. P: 116 *Butler's Lives of Saints.*]

together in the rapturous reciprocations of ravishing love. Hence our saint, immersed as he is in fathomless depths of love, is in the most critical state of becoming unconscious and falling into a state of stupor such as those who, dosing themselves with datura-narcotic, may be said to fall into ! Hence the plight of this inebriated Saint excites more our fear. Whereas the other Saint Nammāzhvār is yet in the state of hot pursuit after God. He is thus yet lonely and conscious of his individual self. He is yet not intoxicated to self-oblivion. The energy flowing from a mind, full-strong with the ardent expectation of meeting his Bride-groom and Beloved companion, still sustains him and keeps him alive. So we have no need to fear him yet, as the other saint whom we find drowned in love and therefore needing help ! *

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. VI p. 2865. "Uṇṇuṇḍōru" vi-7-1].

TOPIC 114.

Visible signs of love to God.

Practice has more effect than precept. We need no lengthy lectures from learned men. It is enough to witness a saint in his moments of rapturous rapture in union with his God,—moments when his whole being thrills with love, and his eyes swim with pearls of tears of delight. "Blessed be such saints !" Nāṇjiyār used to say.—"Thrice did I go over the Love-Treatise of Tiruvāimozhi with Tirunāṇḍiyār-Aṇḍaiyār, but none of the teachings did affect and melt my heart so much as when I actually witnessed him, once when explaining a certain passage, transported with raptures of Divine emotion,

<p>1. Cp "Oh glory in which I am lost, Too deep for the plummet of thought !</p>	<p>On an ocean of Duty loss'd, I am swallow'd, I sink into night." [Madhavu Gayon]</p>
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finding vent in the shape of melting tears."¹

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. VI, p. 2872. "Laguṇḍoṇu" vi-8-1].

TOPIC 116.

Love for God's Abodes.

'Where could we witness such saints?' In all Holy Lands may they be. Tirukkōlūr was such a Land. A resident of this place had left it and had employed himself in tilling the land in an out of the way place called Śōzha-kulāntaka. Anandāzhvān, a great devotee, finding this man so employed, inquired,—"What is thy native town?"

Man.—" (The Holy Place) Tirukkōlūr."

Devotee. "Then why didst thou leave it?"

Man. "I had to leave it in order to gain a living."

Devotee. "Rather than forsake a Holy Land where thy Eternal Living (God) dwells, better thou hadst tarried there even if thou hadst there to graze asses, by the wherewithal to tend thy cartcase!"

[Bhag: Vish. Bk. VI. p. 28, 2. "Laguṇḍoṇu" vi-7-1].

1. Cp. (a) "श्रुतमप्यौपानिषदंदूरेहरिकयामृतत्

यमसन्निद्रवाञ्छितप्रेमाशुप्लवकोद्गमाः ॥ "

14. 'Even God science such as that of the Upanishads is remote from the ambrosia of Hari's narratives,

if it fails to melt the heart, wet the eye, and thrill the frame."

[Malābhā]

(b) "कथंविनरोमहर्षद्वताचितसविना।

विनानन्दाशुकलयाशुदबेद्वनस्याविनाशयः "

'How lone to God-unattended with. Immune-thrilling, heart-dissof-ving, and eye running tears of joy—

can purify the soul?"

[Bhag. Par. xi-14-23]

[continued.]

TOPIC 117.

Attachment to God's Abode.

Once Rāmānuja was journeying southwards (from Śrī-rangam towards Tirukkōlūr, the Holy Place). He saw a damsel coming from Tirukkōlūr.

"Where dost thou come from?"

"From Holy Tirukkōlūr."

"What, is it possible for people who have once taken their abode in such a Holy Place to leave it again?", exclaimed Rāmānuja in surprise.¹

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. VI. p. 2875. "Uppaṣṣṟu" vi. 7. 1¹.

(c) "वाग्गद्गदावतयेस्याचिसंहसत्यभीष्टं हृदयं कचिच्च ।

विलम्बज्ज्वालायतेनूत्यतेचमद्भक्तियुक्तोभुवनं पुनाति ॥ "

That lover of Mine saves the world whose voice becomes choked, whose heart softens, who laughs and cries by turns, and unconcerned sings and dances.'

[Bhāg. Pur xi. 14-24

(d) Read the Life of Gaṇeśya, of Venkatādri-svāmi and many other God-lovers mentioned in Part II of our Lectures on *beṣaya* &c

(c) "Whilst he (Thomas Aquinas) was preaching on Good Friday on the love of God for men, and our ingratitude to him, his whole audience melted into tears to such a degree, that he was obliged to stop several times."

[P. 69. Vol. iii. Butler's Lives of Saints.]

(f) He whose heart is dull to Divine Love is thus described:—

"तदस्मत्सारं हृदयं तदेदं

यद्गृह्यमाणैर्हरिनामधेयैः ।

न विक्रियेतायमुखे विकारो

नेत्रे जलं गच्छते पुद्गलः ॥ "

[Bhāg. Pur vi. 2-24].

1. Reasons for desertion given by the Holy Damsel are 81. These must be juxtaposed to another book,

It is called *Tirukkōlūr-Ammaṭṭa Nakaryam*.

TOPIC 118.

The world as God-abundant and as God forsaken.

To saints, the utterance of the Holy Name of God is so preciously sweet that they imagine the whole world sings forth the Name like themselves. To them, when the world seems to be full of God, and seems as if its vast board is reverberating with their own Divine sentiment, it is acceptable, otherwise it is detestable. This truth is embodied in the following dialogue:—

Petr: queried Nambillai —“Holy Sire! Why could not St. Nanniazhvar imagine his articles of sport such as the ball, the flower-basket &c., as chanting forth God's Holy name¹, just as he imagined the whole world chanting forth² And therefore the Saint need not have abandoned these articles as Godless³”

Nambillai:—“Not so, son! Firstly when the St. said ‘world’, it meant the intelligent beings who inhabit the world; whereas no idea of intelligence is conveyed by the articles flower basket &c. Secondly, when anything is found destitute of God, it must be resigned, howmuchsoever otherwise it might appear to give joy, just like the Kingdom of Ayodhya itself appearing detestable to Bharata, when destitute of Râma.⁴

[Bhag. Vish. Bk VI. p. 2883. “Pûva” vi 7-3].

1 (a) The Holy Name here alluded to, when translated, is nearly thus “Lord of Mercy” or “Merciful Justice”, symbolized as Sri and Vishnu or Mother-Father (Tirumoz). (b) Dr. F. W. Faber writes:—“See how Mercy and Justice (= Lakshmi-Nardiyaga) mingle with and magnify each other, how they put on each other's look, and fill each other's offices.” [P. 411-412, Ch. iv Bk. iii, The Creator and the Creature.”]

(b) “Nothing can be more per-

fect than the union between strength and sweetness, in the operations of grace. These two inseparable qualities act in concert, to enable us to do good. Strength is tempered by sweetness, and sweetness is supported by strength. One stimulates, the other persuades, so that the soul is at once powerfully assisted, and strongly supported.” [Fr. de Sales's Love of God p. 73. Ch. xii. Bk. ii].

2. Kaikeyi and her son Bharata—Kaikeyi:—

TOPIC 119.

All who are Godly are Worship-Worthy.

Even our disciples, our own children, are worthy of worship when they become God's own.¹ One day Nāñjiyar led his disciple Nambūlai to the Holy Assembly, and in their presence and hearing, loudly acclaimed the praises of his disciple. Guessing however that the Assembly might wrongly construe his conduct, he addressed them thus —“ Brothers ! Have no opinion about my lauding my own disciple in the public. For, has not St. Tirumāgaiy-Āzhvār sung . “ How can I look upon the (spiritual) son, who goes to worship the Lord of Tirukkannapuram, as my (bodily) son ? ” [Tirumozhi vi 2-9].

[Bhag : Vish : Bk. VI. p. 291 r. “ Kānyam ” vi 7-9].

TOPIC 120.

Worthiness makes no distinctions.

Ammuñiy-āzhvār used to prostrate to his own disciple. When questioned as to the reasonableness of this procedure, he

“ Up then most dutiful ' maintain
The royal state, arise, and reign
• • • • •

This town and realm are all thine
own.” *Bharata*

“ Quick darting like a serpent
named

He fell to earth with rage indam-
ed ” [*Ramāyana* :

1. (a) Read the story of Jesus
washing the feet of his disciples,

[*John xiii* .

(b) Jesus, pointing to his disci-
ples said —“ For whosoever shall
do the will of my Father that is in
heaven, he is my brother, sister,
and mother ” [*Matt xii-50*]

2 Read the account of Derabātī
and her saintly son Kapila, whose
disciple she became. [*Bhāg 3rd*
Skandha 25th Chapter].

She prays to her son-Teacher
thus

अयमेदेव समोहमपाकृष्टत्वमर्हासे ।

योनप्रदोहममेतीत्येतास्मिन्थोजितस्त्वया ॥

तत्तागमहंशरणंशरण्यंस्वभृत्यसेसारतरोःकुडारं ।

जिज्ञासयाप्रकृतैःपूषस्यनयामिसदमभिदांवारिष्टं ॥

said. —“ If they be any others than my own disciple, I have need to know them first and learn that they are worthy to receive such an homage; but as regards my own disciple I have no need to make such a scrutiny, nor have scruples as by long acquaintance and association he is proved worthy of worship’

[Bhag. Vish. Bk VI. p. 2911. “ Kāriyam ” vi-7-9]

TOPIC 121

Powers of salvation vested in saints a token of God's love.

God's love for his creatures is so great that he gives his own saints to them, endowed with the powers of salvation. Aruṭṭāp-perumṭṭi-Embarumānār, the disciple of Rāmānuja, was on his death bed. Kūraṭt āzhvān with Pīlāiy uṇṅāvilḷi Dāsar (intimate disciples of Rāmānuja and on whom therefore Emberumānār looked as his saviours) proceeded to him on a visit. Seeing them, he said to Āzhvān: “ The remembrance of your not doing me a favour, I can dispel only after I join the Holy feet of Ālavandār in Heaven.” The reference here is to a request made by Emberumānār to Kūraṭt-āzhvān to plead for him with Lord Ranganātha to take him to Heaven soon. But Āzhvān did not do so. Reference to Ālavandār in Heaven instead of Rāmānuja himself who was still living on earth, was out of respect for the latter, moreover Ālavandār being the Master of Rāmānuja, reference to one as to the other is spiritually equally valid.

[Bhag. Vish. Bk VI. p. 2927 “ Ponnulaku ” vi-8-1].

TOPIC 122

The virtue of confession and meditation

The principle of meditation and confession is thus. By meditation, effected by the God's elect, God's absence from man is

converted into His presence; in other words, His detachment from us is changed to attachment, like the mango-story of the Mahābhārata, it is said. Lord Krishna and His dear companions, Arjuna and others, were once strolling in the woods and went to the shade of a mango tree for rest. Arjuna aimed at a mango fruit and let it fall. Lord Krishna cried "The fruit is food for the ascetic saints (Rishis) who dwell here. They may curse thee." Then all the Pāṇḍavas tremblingly asked,—"How shall we get this mango to attach itself again to the tree?" "By you all disclosing your inmost secrets to Me", the Lord returned. Then they all opened their hearts, and even Draupadī was constrained to reveal how her heart hankered after a sixth husband (Karna) though she had already the Pāṇḍavas five. After this the detached mango got itself attached. So do our souls get purged by confession to Godly souls and are made clean to go to God.¹

[Bhag. Viśh. Bk. VI. p. 2953. "Tumadu" vi-8-4].

TOPIC 123.

The debt of protection due to Refugees.

When saint Arulālap-perumāl Embērumāṇḍar was about to wing his flight to the Abodes of the Blessed, some disciples at his bed-side reverently inquired what was passing in his mind. To which he said—"I was meditating on the event of a simple bird (the dove) causing grief to Lord Rāma's heart." The allusion is as follows:—

1. "Amen I say unto you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in hea-

ven." Matt. xviii-19].

"Whoso sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." [John xx-23].

Râma reasoned thus with Sugrîva (the Vânar king) when the latter would not let in Vibhîshana, anxiously waiting outside to pay his obeisance to Râma :—

“ And can I, Vânar King ' forget
The great, the universal debt,
Ever to aid and welcome those
Who pray for shelter, friends or foes ?
Hast thou not heard the deathless praise
Won by the dove in olden days,
Who conquering his fear and hate
Welcomed the slayer of his mate,
And gave a banquet, to refresh
The weary fowler, — of his flesh ?

[Râmâyana vi-18-24ff].

Nambîlîar used to explain the purport of this to be thus —
“ That once we have in faith confided our self-will unto the keeping of God (as Vibhîshana did to Lord Râma), this act has spiritual power sufficient to safely carry us on to the very acme of spiritual eminence. Nothing needs be done on our side. For God, our Refuge, taketh up the work of our salvation after our surrender, for such is His Perfection, Glory and Grace, on which we have but to implicitly rely. (We need not even bend a blade of grass for our salvation, for the work is entrusted to the Almighty). ”

[Bhag. Vish. Bk VI p. 2966 “ Enminna ” vi-8-6].

TOPIC 124.

God Manifest in Images.

Of the five-fold manifestations of God, the Manifestation Worshippable, or God present in Images is one which purposely

1 This does not mean an indifferent or a mere non-militant frame of mind, but one of friendly inclina-

tion to God, in love. But read Topic 123-124/rw.

hides His Transcendant nature, that thus He may suit and be acceptable to the weak and ignorant state of His worshippers. In this Manifestation, God, out of His condescension, choses to will that He seem entirely in the hands of His worshippers, hiding His omniscience and omnipotence, or seeming the very reverse of these in his worshippers' hands.¹ God Supreme, is experienced in His symbols made of wood, stone &c., only by saints of extraordinary faith and fervour.² A devotee—a

1 Vide the learned Translation of *Tatva-Traya* by Vogi S. Parthasarathi Aiyangar, in this connection pp. 43 ff. I give a few extracts only. 80 "The Manifestation Worshipable (Archavatāra), is that Form of the Lord, in which, unlike His Manifestation Distinctive, * * the Lord * * * is pleased without any kind of limitation as to times, places, or persons, to be present and manifest Himself to all, in temples and homes, to wink at faults, and to be, for every movement or business, dependent on the worshipper." 82, "Though appearing with the true Relation of Proprietor and Property reversed, and in the character of something devoid of knowledge, power or liberty, the Lord, in this Incarnation, is pleased, out of His infinite Mercy, to confer on His devotees, every useful boon."

"Who, God can see in flesh and bone.
He, God can see in wood and stone;
Who can't see God in wood and stone,

He can't see God in flesh and bone."

Cardinal Newman, (Et.) uses the following significant language in his *Meditations and Devotions*: Part iii Bk. x, p. 511. — "And it is

love, which keeps Thee here still,] even now that Thou hast ascended on high, in a small tabernacle, and under cheap and common outward forms. O *Amor Meus*, if Thou wert not infinite love, wouldst Thou remain here, one hour, imprisoned and exposed to slight, indignity and insult?" (Cp. Blottier's Hymn to Lord Rāṅganātha) II 74 *Adagio*."

Cp: "Since all things are the manifestations of Being,

One amongst them must be an Idol.

If the polytheist only knew what idols are,

How would he be wrong in his religion?"

{*Gulshan-i-Bak*}.

Read Pp. 336 of Max Muller's *Six Systems of Philosophy*, "On Idolatry, a necessity of our nature." Also read 1st p. 210. E of our *Holy Lives of Dravidian Saints*.

2. "For, Amen I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, — Remove from hence thither, and it shall remove."

{*Matt*: xvii-1-9

Vinappam Seyvâr carried about him his nut-wallet with him; and in it he had kept his Sâlagram-image as his constant companion. When by accident, the tiny marble-like image, mixed up with the nut (which he ate), entered his mouth, he would feel the hardness of the marble differing of course from the nut. He would then reverently take it out, wash it in water he had in his vessel, dry it with his robe, dress it, and taking cymbals in his hand sing a song of praise from St. Nammâzhvâr and then lull it to sleep again in his nut-wallet. This confusion often happened with him. A Vaishṇava of the ritual type (more than of love to God) often observed this, to him blasphemous, proceeding of Seyvâr, and not containing himself any longer, burst out "Sire, will you deign to present me with your (desecrated) marble-God?" "Most gladly", he said, and transferred his Holy Property. The Vaishṇava took it home, and worshipped it in all the strict detail of ceremonial worship, enjoined for such occasions. The Image appeared to him in his dream and spoke thus: "Fool, I was happy in the temple of my Seyvâr's nut-wallet,—Seyvâr to whom St. Nammâzhvâr's Holy Chant, Tiruvâmozhi, is his life and soul. I had the felicity of becoming bathed in the nectar-like saliva of his holy mouth. I had too the delight of listening to the sweet canticles from St. Âzhvâr's, which he warbled to me. But thou hast deprived Me of all this happiness and subjectest me to all the tedious trials of thy formal worship. The Vaishṇava was by this dream put into great trepidation. He ran to Seyvâr forthwith and restored to him his dear Sâlagrama."

[Bhag Vish: Bk VI, P 2981. "Vandirundu"]

1. Cp: Matt: 23. Scribes and Pharisees asked Jesus:—"why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the ancients? For they wash

not their hands when they eat bread." To which Jesus said,— "Hypocrites, 'This people honour-eth me with their lips but their

TOPIC 125.

The Superiority over all else of Eternal Bliss

Tirukkuraup-purāṇ Pillāṇ (the author of the 6,000 commentary on St. Nammāzhvār's Tiruvāymozhi) was preparing for his final exit from this world, when Nāṇḍiyar went to him on a visit to inquire of his health. He found Pillāṇ ardently and often repeating from St. Nammāzhvār, the passage "When will my painful sojourn on earth terminate?" 'Āvi vi-9-9. On hearing this, Nāṇḍiyar broke out into a sobbing (at the thought that his beloved Elder was passing for ever away from their midst), when Pillāṇ called him to order by saying "Alas! Jīyar! what movest thee so to tears? Dost thou really imagine that the bliss of Heaven is inferior to our sojourn here?" 1

[Bhag. Vish. Bk VI P. 3023. "Āvi" vi-9-9]

heart is far from me. And in vain doth worship me, teaching doctrines and commandments of men." Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man but what cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man."

(a) On Image worship, read (a) the Holy Bible Exod. xxx-18, Num. xxi-9-10. Exod. xxxvii-7 Paralipo, xxviii-18, Heb. xi-21, 2 Kings, vi-12-16, Psalm: xxviii-5; Phil. ii 10. (b) Also read Rev: J. Meakin's Defence of Holy images, (Boswell). (c) The Rev: E. L. Ruxford O. D. of Boston says:—"And assuredly the Great Spirit who works through all forms and who makes all things His ministers, can make the rudest image a medium through which He will approach His child." [P 520. Vol. I History of the World's Parliement of Religions, Chicago].

(b) "Our Bhāshyakāra (Rāmā-

naja) once examined a disciple, by making the latter go through in his blessed presence the form of worship, known as *Nityam*. The pupil went through every detail without the slightest deviation from what he had been taught. But lo! instead of praise he got only a scolding for the exactness of his conformity. Our Bhāshyakāra observing "Stiff hearted, surely, thou must be, O my good friend."

The Lord's High Presence, thus doth no confusion send."

[Pārthasarathi Yogi's letter to us dated 13-7-1902]

1. Equivalent to "Woe is me, that my pilgrimage is prolonged", of the Bible. 2. Read Thomas à Kempis said: Chr: Ch: xxvii. Bk "Is the gain or loss of the Kingdom of God an alternative of no importance?"

TOPIC 116.

At God's bidding, enemies turn friends.

When God wills, even enemies turn friends, oppressors are converted into protectors. Garuda is the tribal enemy, for instance, of the serpent-race. One Sumukha of this race sought Vishṇu's refuge and protection against the fearful raids of Garuda. Vishṇu promised protection, and calling Garuda himself, the racial enemy, consigned Sumukha to his care. Garuda had thus to lay aside his enmity and befriend Sumukha.¹

[Bhag. Vish. Bk VI P 304] "Ulakam ' vi 10.1]

TOPIC 127.

God and His Holy Church form one body, and discharge the function of Salvation.

Nambīllar raised this question one day with his Master Nāñjiyar: "Holy Sire! there are Four Ways² mentioned to lead to Final Liberation, and they say there is a Fifth. Is there anything like it in the world?" Quoth Nāñjiyar: "My son! I am not aware of a Fifth. The Fourth Way is His Grace, the Almighty Himself. If a Fifth be mentioned again as an *Independent* Way, it would be as absurd as if one

1. (n) [Vide Mahābhār. Udhava Purva Yoga. Edn. by Pratāp Chandra Roy. Pp 312 ff.]

(b) Cp. Tiruvettam verse 27. See also &c

2 On the Four Ways to Salvation, consult P 573, Table, appended to Eng. Trans. of our Bk VI, Rāmānuja Bhāshya. The Four Ways referred to are: (1) Karma, (2) Jāṇa, (3) Bhakti, (4) Prapatti (5) Āchārya-abhivāṇa; the last, though classed as Fifth is really

included under the Fourth. Thus it is written in Śrī-Naṭṭana-Bhāṣa or the Word-Jewel, Eng. Tr. by Yogi S. Pārthasarathi].

"Resort to God like winning boons,

After kissing the boon-granter's hand;

Faith in Teacher's like winning boons

After kissing the boon-granter's feet "

should interpret the Taittiriya Upanishad passage "The etheric space of the heart, and what is therein," ¹ to mean that "etheric space" is Nārāyaṇa, and "what is therein" as Rudra. So I am not aware of an Independent Fifth, surpassing the Fourth (inasmuch as all Āchāryas constitute members of the One God head, and constitute His body) ²

"But, put in Nambōllai, what does St. Namināzhvār mean, when he asks God to show him a Way, in his Holy song—*"Āvā-ennādu"* [VI. 10-4,] as if another Way than God Himself existed? To which Nāñjiyar replied—"This question is suggested by thy ignorance. The meaning of the passage is this—"My God 'when thou dost exist, is it possible I can pant like this? It seemeth as if there is a remedy besides Thyself to heal my wounds ' If so, show it.' [This shows that the Saint's languishing for God's coming is so great that every moment of delay or pause in His approach, the Saint construed into a doubt whether God did exist at all, a doubt arising merely from his feeling of great impatience. For, doth not the very fact of the Saint supplicating Him to show a Way of Salvation tacitly admit His Existence? And the asking Him to point to a way of Salvation is really indirectly asking that He Himself be the Way and unto Himself.]

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. VI P. 3155. "*Āvā-ennādu"* VI. 10-4.]

1. The text is —"तत्रापिदहसंगनंतस्मिन्पदन्तः॥"

2. Cp. "If the feet and hands had each an individual will, they could never be at rest save by subjecting that will to the main will which rules the whole body. Without that they would be in perpetual

disorder and mishap, but seeking only the welfare of the whole body each attains its own individual needs." [Lear's Selections from Pascal's Thoughts. P. 172.]

TOPIC 128.

Our free-will inclining to God's grace is itself an act of His Grace.

A disciple of Nāṇjiyar proposed the following question :—
 "Holy Sire ! If God is our only Way (or Means) for salvation, then there is nothing for us to do ? Why should you then inculcate a something yet as necessary on our part, even such as the act of surrender to God, an act plainly indicative of something done by us to God from out of our own free-will ?"
 At this question, Nāṇjiyar closed his ears as if he heard something blasphemous and exclaimed, "Alas ! that I should have disclosed to thee this Sacred Truth of resignation to God (*Prapatti*), handed down as a most Holy Legacy from our Saint Nāthamuniḡal downward to my own immediate Spiritual Preceptor—a Truth uniformly revealed by one Saint after another in unbroken succession. So saying he smote his forehead, angered and chagrined, and forthwith retired into his private chamber. His heart was moved with both sorrow and pity at the obduracy of men's hearts in not receiving and understanding the spirit of such truths.¹

[Ullag : Viśv : Bk VI p. 3055 'Āṭav-ennāthu' 11-10-4.]

TOPIC 129.

The sign of Godliness and Ungodliness.

"By one sign we can recognize whether we are godly or ungodly," taught Nāṇjiyar, "i.e., when any ill befalls others, see if our hearts do then move to compassionate them,

1 The gist of this saying is that unless man first inclines to God, in other words make use of his free-will, to incline of its own free-choice Godward, God's saving grace would be inoperative. Cp "Let us revert to the birds mentioned by Aristotle; the wind raises them,

but will not enable them to proceed far unless by extending their wings, balancing their bodies and plunging into the air, they second the power of the breeze, if attracted by the appearance of some verdant spot, or humbled from having lain a long time motionless, they neglect

or not; i.e., whether our hearts condole their sufferings or gloat over them. In the former case, we may console ourselves as related to God, in the latter as cast from Him. We can thus be our own friends or foes as we choose."¹

[Bhag. Vish : Bk. VI. p. 3056. "Āvā-*evam* ' vi 10-4.]

TOPIC 130.

The Perversity of our free-will resisting the free operation of God's grace.

If the relation between creatures and the Creator as children and Mother respectively, be considered, it would appear as if God stands responsible for everything that may befall the creature. If a child for instance should fall into a well, they would impute the act to the mother's carelessness, in not having kept a watchful eye upon the child. Thus if the crea-

to profit by the rising breeze and fall again to the ground, they may indeed be said to have felt the wind, but it has been useless to them, because they failed to profit by the facility it afforded them for flying."

"Thus, we are aroused or excited by the inspirations of grace, in following their attractions, we co-operate with or second their power, but, by refusing our consent, we reject them. The voice of grace can speak to our hearts without our concurrence; but our co-operation is necessary for yielding to its inspirations." [Pp 78-79. Fr de Sales's Love of God. Ch. xii. Bk. ii].

"God never refuses his divine assistance to those who prove their desire to advance in the path of perfect charity." [Ibid. p 46, Ch. xviii, Bk. i].

"I do not see," says St. Theresa,

"how God can come to us, or enrich us with His graces, if we shut the door against him. Though He is infinitely desirous to communicate Himself to us with all His gifts, He will have our hearts to be found disengaged, alone, and burning with a desire to receive Him." [P 404 Vol. 1, Butler's Lives of Saints].

Vide, Topic 123 and ft. note, *supra*. If the attitude of the heart be not one of opposition to God, or even be not one of indifference, it ought to be one of loving, yielding to the operations of grace. This attitude is itself a gift of His Grace. Vide also Topic 130 *infra* treating of the perversity of our free-will.

Read *Sri Gaekona bhāṣana* Sentences 66 ff [Engl/Trans].

1. (a) See Bh : Gī. vi-1, 2, 3, and its comments by Rāmakṛṣṇa. [our Engl Trans.]

ture goes wrong, it seems evident that the Creator, our Mother, neglected it. Rishi Udañka came to Lord Kṛṣṇa, and queried him thus: "Both the parties (Kurus and Pāṇḍus) are equal to Thee, Lord, and yet Thou hast caused the destruction of the Kurus—viz., Duryodhana and his party,—whereas Thy treatment of the Pāṇḍus has been quite the opposite! How canst Thou be thus partial?" Lord Kṛṣṇa gave a series of reasons for His preference for one party as against the other and ended by pointing out to Udañka that Duryodhana and his party were found obstinately averse to all righteousness, despite His undefatigable efforts, by every means in His power, to turn them from their evil ways, and that they had a perversity of will which would listen to no kind of persuasion. To this Udañka retaliated again: "But Thou, Lord, couldst certainly have predisposed them also for righteousness!"

[Bhag. Viśv. Bk VII. P. 312: "U'-mlaviya" vi:1:1]

(b) also [ad vi:32. Rāmānuja's comment on this is quoted here at length from the work above quoted, for the benefit of the reader.

"Knowing that that ātma (soul) has no connection with happiness or misery, he (the saint or godly man) looks the same on one as on the other, whether they befall him or befall others; happiness or joy in the shape of a son being born, (for example), and misery or grief in the shape of that son dying, (for example)." In other words, to the godly man, the joy to others causes joy in him, and grief to others causes him grief. His heart to others' felicity or misfortune is the same as when these should fall to his own lot. [P. 210 our Engl. Transl.]

[Vaido Tapes. 123 & 128. S. J. V.]

Cfr. (c) "He (St. Augustine) proves in the 9th Chapter, ('The City of God') that charity was infused into the angels at their creation, and he adds, as a probability, that they all received an equal degree of grace. He then asks, why some of them have not only persevered, but even attained a great degree of glory, while others, on the contrary, rejected the graces given them, consecrated to sin, and thereby incurred eternal damnation. To which he replies, that the only reason which can be alleged for it is, that they first maintained themselves in the state of charity by the grace of their Creator, and that the second forfeited their state of sanctity through their own perverse will." [St. Fr. de Sales's Love of God p. 71-7]

TOPIC 131.

Heart's Grateful Mood—the Result of God's Grace.

Even to get into an attitude of mind, feeling thankful to God for the manifold mercies which he lavishes on His creatures, is possible only after the operation of a Sovereign act of God's grace.¹ For even saints who were keenly alive to this grateful attitude of mind, sometimes ran into a mood when they complained of God as not having done to them everything that they desired. Not saushed with interior heavenly sweetness, for example, with which God dowered St. Nannāzhvār in great abundance, he yet complained that what he felt interiorly was not confirmed by exterior sensible experiences. Rudra, it is related, was not satisfied with food offered him by a devotee of his, and he asked for more. The story goes to this effect:—

Ch: x. Bk. B].

(b) Also read Ch. I: Bk. II entitled "The Privation, as well as the Decrease of Charity, proceeds entirely from the perverted will of the creature."

(c) Also read the *Ultimate Conclusions*, at the End of Bk. IV of the Golden Book entitled: "*Arharya-kṛpāya*" by Azhagā māṇa-vālap-perumā Nāyanār, the Holy Brother of Pillai Lōkāchārya, the Author of "*Śrī Vachana-Bhūṣaṇa*." The details of Udayka's (Bhagya's son) episode is found in *Maṭābhārata*, *Aṣṭamedha Parva*, Ch. 53 ff.

1. Cp. (a) "I know, indeed, and confess that of myself I am not able to render Thee due thanks and praise for Thy smallest benefits for I am less than the least of all Thy mercies; and when I attempt to contemplate Thy excellent ma-

jesty, my spirit fails, unable to sustain the vast idea." [Thomas à Kempis Imit. Chr. Ch. xvi. Bk. vi].

(b) "What bonds of gratitude I feel

No language can declare,
Beneath the oppressive weight I feel,

'Tis more than I can bear
When shall I that blessing prove
To return Thee love for love."

Madame Guyon].

(c) "Among other things, He has thought of making you take good resolutions to love and serve Him."

[Ch. II, "Consoling thoughts" by Fr. de Sales.]

(d) "For, without the grace of God, we cannot even have a good thought" [p. 148. *Happiness of Heaven* by Rev. F. J. Boudrenx.]

are collected on the spot, in such language as,—

“ Day and night she knows not sleep, ¹
 In floods of tears her eyes do swim ”
 “ Discus ’! she cries ; ‘ O Conch ’ ” she cries,
 And clasps her hands, to them bowing
 ‘ Lotus-like eyes ’! she weeps and reels ‘
 ‘ Ah ! how without Thee can I bear ’,
 She pants and feels all earth for Him ‘
 O Lord Rāṅga, abiding where
 Waters abundant flow ; where fish
 Madden’d with joy all leap and dance ‘
 How with my daughter wilt Thou deal ! ”

[Tiru-vāy-mozhi. vii. 2-1 “ Kaṅḡulum ”]

Wherever Bhaktar meditated on this verse, he would in intense emotion place both his palms over his head and cry .
 “ Hard-hearted that we are ; how are we going to realise the depth of the Saint’s love as uttered here ! —we who cannot

1. Cp : “ Sleep at last has fled these eyes.” [Madame Guyon].

2. (a) Cp : “ He (St. Francis de Assisi) was endowed with an extraordinary gift of tears. His eyes seemed two fountains of tears, which were almost continually falling from them, inasmuch that at length he almost lost his sight. When physicians advised him to repress his tears,—for otherwise he would be quite blind, the saint answered : “ Brother physicians, the spirit has not received the benefit of sight for the flesh, but the flesh for the spirit : We ought not for the love of that sight which is common

to us and flies, to put an impediment to spiritual sight and celestial comfort. {P. 114. Vol. x. Butler’s Lives of Saints.}

(b) Says St. Gregory of Nyassa about St. Ephrem : “ We cannot call to mind his perpetual tears without melting into tears. To weep seemed almost as natural to him as it is for other men to breathe. Night and day his eyes seemed always swimming in tears. No one could meet him at any time, who did not see them trickling down his cheeks.” [Butler’s Lives of Saints, Vol. vii, p. 114].

realise in the least his sentiments,—we who cannot understand his heart!"

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. VII; P. 3165. "Kaṅgulum" VII. 2-1.]

TOPIC 131

Complete sacrifice of self-love—a sign of entire trust in God.

One characteristic of saintly men is their absolute dependence on God and His Providence. Otherwise they would stand as yet unrid of self-love. * Akalanka-brahmarāya was building the fort-wall called *Adaya vakundān* (the outermost or the 7th Rampart round the Holy Shrine of Śrīraṅgam). In aligning the wall, the house of *Ṭayāzhvān* came in the way, which he was about to dismantle. Bhattārva (the Pastor of the Rāya, came to know this, and sending for Rāya addressed him thus:—"My son, it is not the dead-wall as thou thinkest, that really protects our Lord Rāṅganātha, but the living walls of the few Holy Dwellers, the Lord's Beloved Saints of the place (of whom *Āzhvān* is one). Also, have no pride of thinking that thy human endeavours can provide any safeguards (like these material walls) for our Lord. Give up such self-love. It is the Lord that doth all."

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. VII P. 3168. "Kaṅgulum VII. 2-1.]

1. Cp. "If we compare several theologians who speak eloquently of the Almighty, but who love Him little, with those who loved Him ardently, as the Ignatiuses, the Cyprians, the Chrysostoms, the Augustines, the Hilaries, the Ephremi, the Gregorios, the Bernards, and several other illustrious men of antiquity, (like the Indian *Āzhvān*), oh! what a difference shall we discover in their language! We all use the same expressions, but the words pronounced by those lovers of the Almighty were inflam-

ed and embalmed, if we may say so, with the delicious perfume of divine love, whereas, with us they are only cold expressions, which neither contain the energy nor the sweetness of charity." [Love of God by Fr. de Sales P. 204 Ch. I Bk. vi]

2. Cp: "The love of self is more hurtful to the soul than the united power of the world," [Thom. à Kempis, Imit. Chr. ix. Bk. iii.]

Read *Journal Intime of Maine de Biran*.

TOPIC 134.

The three successive stages of Love to God.

Three stages of love to God among saints is described Recollection, Trance and Rallying. Recollection (*Smaraṇa*) is recollection of all the past ravishments of soul, vouchsafed by God. Trance or Fainting is consequent on desolation at this Recollection, not yielding present enjoyment. Rallying is the sudden lucidity whilst in this state of trance. This is considered as a dangerous state. The momentary lucidity in delirious trance or senseless state is akin to the sudden lighting up of consciousness when death coma has supervened, or the sudden flare of the flickering light before it dies out. Nāṇjīyar used to relate that when Uynda-piḷḷai chanted St. Nammāzḥvār's verse "Śindikkum (*சிந்திக்கும்*)", he used to stop where the Saint "rallied", and exclaim with fear "Alas, for her (Saint's) lucid state I am undone!"

[Bhag. Viśṇu. Bk: VII, 1st 3194. "Śindikkum" VII-2 5-1]

TOPIC 135.

Motherhood of God and Fatherhood of God—a difference.

"Mother!" This way of addressing God had more fascination for the Saints than addressing Him as "Father." Anand-Āzhvān, for instance, named his daughter as: "My Mother Lakṣmī," and Bhattārya used to address Lord Raṅganātha, 'the Stationary Deity (*Mūla-vigraha*) in the Holy of Holies at Srīraṅgaṇi Temple' thus,—"O Lord! consider me as the trousseau, which thy consort Lakṣmī my Mother brings to thee with Her; and consider that my love to thy Provisional Representative [The Movable *Uthsava-vigraha*] merely proceeds by reason of my mother Lakṣmī residing with Him, as His inseparable companion. I call Thee "Dear", simply be-

cause my Mother is with Thee, and She indeed is *dear* to me."¹

[Bhag Vish. Bk. VII, p. 3212. "En-tiru-magal." vii-2-9].

TOPIC 136.

God fully manifest as Ranganātha—in parts in other Shrines.

St Nannāzhvār's hymnal of 1000 verses called Tiruvāy-mozhi is dedicated to Lord Ranganātha of the Holy Metropolis of Śrīraṅgam. While so, how comes it that particular decades of this Hymnal have been dedicated to Lords Resident at other Holy Shrines? To which Nambīlāi used to reply "Yes, portions from the Main Dedication are doled out to the minor Lords like holy food first offered to Lord Rāṅga and is then divided out and distributed to the Partial Lords."²

[Bhag Vish. Bk. VII, p. 3221: Mugilvanṇan" VII 2-11.

TOPIC 137.

Motherhood of God ever spotless.

Lord Rāma's welcome of Sītā, after her release from Rāvana's thralldom was vitiated by feelings of suspicion and ire struggling

1. Vide Topic 15 p. 12; and the copious Foot Notes thereto.

2. Vide, Topic No. 171, for a detailed description of the particular glories manifested in Particular Shrines, &c. In a Criticism [by the Hindu Madras, 1897, in a series of 11 articles] on Dr J. H. Barrows on the claims of Christianity (which should be read by every Hindu of the Modern Times), the following is found (P. 26) : "There was at no time among the Jews a truly spiritual conception of God, and if Christ's God is only a "sublimated and etherealized" edition of 'the ancestral fetish stone of the people

of Israel,' we do not see how Christianity can altogether discard the taint of idolatry, in a far more gross form of it than prevails anywhere in India. For, the Indian idolatry has nothing gross or degrading about it. Every Indian Image is a symbol of some profoundly spiritual conception of God. Let Dr Barrows study from some knowing Hindu the symbolism contained in the conception of God as Ranganātha of the Śrīraṅgam Temple or Natarāja of the Chidambaram Shrine." Read Intro: to our *Holy Lyrics of the Āṭhara*.

in his heart to find vent and afford an opportunity to Sītā to vindicate herself. Śrī Rāma addressed her thus in acrimonious language :—

“Twas not for thee our blood was shed,
Or Lankā filled with grant dead.
No fond affection for my wife
Inspired me in the hour of strife,
I battled to avenge the cause
Of honour and insulted laws.
My love is fled, for on thy fame
Lies the dark blot of sin and shame,
And thou art hateful as the light
That flashes in the injured sight.

[Rāmāyaṇa VI-118]

Sage Ālavandār (Āmunāchārya) would not brook in his heart the spotless purity of mother Sītā being thus unjustly called in question by Lord Rāma, and exclaimed in anguished rage against his unreasonable accusation thus : “It is n’t my radiant Mother’s light that hurts, but Rāmā’s eye that is sore is what is hurt” (That is the mote is in Rāmā’s eye, Sita is pure. She is bright like the pure flame but she appears tainted owing to suspicion’s darkness obscuring Rāmā’s heart) ‘‘

[Bhag. Vish. Bk: VII p. 3265. “Pēriyal” VII-3-7.]

TOPIC 138.

Rāma-Avatāra abounding in Every Divine Grace.

Kurattāzhvān’s admiration for God, incarnate as Lord Rāma was very great and in his excess of preference, all other

1. Op. (a) “The Holy ghost calls her His own spotless and faithful spouse, over whom the breath of sin never passed.” [P. 153, Happiness of Heaven by Rev.

F. J. Goodreau].

(b) “And why seest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye and seest not the beam that is in thy own eye?” [Matt. vi-3].

Incarnations—even that of Lord Kṛṣṇa—appeared inferior in his sight. The Perfections and Graces of Godship were to him complete in Râma-Incarnation, which eclipsed the glories of all other Avatâras compared with Râma. All other Avatâras were to him like a hoof-marked pool ¹ compared with the boundless ocean. Thus did people great and small, declare Râma to be to his father Daśaratha :—

“ Then all the people made reply,
Peasant and townsman, low and high
‘ Each noblest gift of form and mind,
O Monarch, in thy son we find.
Do then the god-like virtues hear
Which Râma to our hearts endear.
So richly blest with graces, none
In all the earth excels thy son.”

[Râmâyana, ii-2]

Bhattârya like his father Kîranâtha was also in favor of the superior virtues of Râma-avatâr. In order to put Bhattârya to proof, one day Śiriy-âttân submitted a question thus :—
“ Sire ‘ admitted that Lord Râma possesses the full complement of divine virtues, yet to me it seems he doth not possess the virtue of “ *Condescension* ” (*saulabhya*), which Lord Kṛṣṇa pre-eminently possessed, for did not {Kṛṣṇa} go as envoy to the Kauravas at the mere bidding of the Pândavas, carrying the message (like that tied to the neck of a carrier-pigeon) ? ” Bhattâr retaliated thus in order to defend his own position in favor of Râma :—“ Râma certainly was prepared to go as messenger, but unfortunately no body bid him to carry any ! ” ²

[Bhag. Vish, Bk. VII, P 3320. “ Karpâr ” VII 5. 1]

1 A shallow indentation made by the cow's hoof on the ground, and filled with water.

2 The mystery of Incarnation is purely Indian. Cp. (a) Bh Gî. iv-5, with commentaries (by Author)

TOPIC 139.

Enmity with God preferred to friendship with Satan.

In respect of Śiṣupāla, the sworn enemy of Lord Kṛṣṇa, Ālavandār denied that he could have obtained salvation by publicly vituperating Lord Kṛṣṇa. Ālavandār defended his statement by saying that as in Śiṣupāla there was not even the remotest wish for salvation (*arthitva*) it was impossible for him to have obtained it. Lord Kṛṣṇa killed him by his Discus, simply as a King would kill a rebellious miscreant and cast him out of doors in order that his kingdom may be rid of unrighteousness. And yet Śiṣupāla is said to have obtained salvation by reason of the good fortune he has had of repeating Kṛṣṇa's Holy Names in the Public Assembly albeit he did so in the course of his malicious indictment, and the good fortune he has had of personally witnessing the Bejewelled Person of the Lord, face to face.¹ The rationale of this extraordinary instance of salvation granted to even a hater of God is accounted

(b) Annie Besant's *Adyar Lectures on Avatars*, 1899; (c) Yogi Parthasārathi Aiyangār's *Tatva-traya*, pp. 141 & 142. (d). "God cannot do without us. He cannot afford to lose our love. He obliges to us; He pleads with us. He punishes only to get love, and stays His hand in the midst. He melts our hearts with beautiful complainings; He mourns like a rejected lover or a suspected friend. He appeals to us with a sort of humility which has no parallel in human love." [Dr. F. W. Faber, *On Creator and Creature*, p. 132. Ch. 1. Bk. ii]. All these and various other sentiments are illustrated in the incarnations of God as Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, &c.

Himself to each of His angels and to holy souls, as if He were the hired servant of each, and each of them were His God." St. Thomas [P. 183. *Spiritual Combat* of F. L. Scupoli].

(f) Also read introductions to our *Holy Lives of the Avatars*.

1. The story of Śiṣupāla is thus wound up in *Vishṇu Purāṇa* iv. 15.—"Thus uttering His Names, even though in malediction; and dwelling upon His image, even though in enmity, he (Śiṣupāla) beheld Kṛṣṇa, when inflicting his death, radiant with resplendent weapons, bright with ineffable splendour in his own Essence as the Supreme Being; and all his passion and hatred ceased, and he was purified from every defect. Being killed by

(e) "Almighty God subjects

for by the infiniteness of God's grace,—a grace, the freeness of which it is beyond our mortal finiteness to conjecture.'²

[Bhag: Vish. Bk VII P 3346. "Kâtpâr" VII. 5-3.]

TOPIC 140.

God's visits and desertions causing Saints transports of joy and pangs of grief.

It is difficult for ordinary seculars to even remotely imagine the depth of feeling which agitates Saints both in the states of visitation and desertion by God. The most eminent St Nam-māzhvār, for instance, was ravished by internal joy at time of visitation, inasmuch that at such junctures he overflowed with adoring praise as related by him for example in Tiru vāy mozhi

the Discus of Vishnu, at the instant he thus meditated, at his feet were consigned by his Divine Adversary, and he was breasted with Him by whose might he had been slain."

Cp "अरसिकजनसंभाषणतौरसिक

जनवाक्कलहमपिश्रेयः ॥"

equivalent to 'Better a quarrel with good men than fellowship with wicked men.'

1 Cp Matt xx —

8. "And when evening was come, the lord of the vineyard saith to his steward: Call the labourers and pay them their hire, beginning from the last even to the first."

9. "When therefore they were come, that came about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny."

10. "But when the first also came, they thought that they

should receive more: and they also received every man a penny."

11. "And receiving it, they murmured against the master of the house."

12. "Saying: These last have worked but one hour, and thou hast made them equal to us, that have borne the burden of the day and the heats."

13. "But he answering one of them, said: Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst thou not agree with me for a penny?"

14. "Take what is thine, and go thy way: I will also give to this last even as to thee."

15. "Or, is it not lawful for me to do what I will? is thy eye evil, because I am good?"

16. "So shall the last be first, and the first last. For many are called but few are chosen."

VII-5. "Karpâr." But when this state was withdrawn, his lamentations alternated, and were so loud as to melt even adamant hearts of even the godless. So loud were they, it is said, as if the whole vast ocean rose as one person and wept and wailed with him with all the might of its roar. This state of desertion by God is embodied in the succeeding Tiruvâymozhi Hymnal VII-5, "Pâmara." Ammaṅgi-ammaḷ, as soon as he came to recite this chapter of the Hymnal, would say :—"We can but listen to it sung, and be entertained, but for us to attempt to dive into the abysmal depths of languishment produced by love, finding utterance in such soul-stirring language, is beyond the bounds of the possible." *

[Bhag Vish Bk: VII. P: 3382. "Pâmara" VII-6-1.]

1. Cp (a) "The vicissitude of day and night in the spiritual life is neither new nor unexpected to those that are acquainted with the ways of God, for the ancient prophets and most eminent saints have all experienced an alternative of visitation and desertion. As an instance of this, the royal prophet thus describes his own case: "When I was in prosperity," says he, "and my heart was filled with the treasures of grace, I said, I shall never be moved." But those treasures being soon taken away, and feeling in himself the poverty of fallen nature, he adds, "Thou didst turn Thy face from me, and I was troubled." (imit: Chr Ch: ix. Bk. II. by Thomas à Kempis).

(b) "When Love departs, a chaos wide and vast,

And dark as hell, is opened in the soul,

When Love returns, the gloomy scene is past,

No tempests shake her, and no fears control."

"Then tell me why those ages of delay?"

Oh Love, all-excellent, once more appear,

Disperse the shades, and snatch me into day,

From this abyss of night, these floods of fear!"

[Madame Guyon].

"The God-ecstatic is one whose sole delight or misery consists respectively in God-companionship or God-separation. St. Nammâkavâr, the ecstatic Vaishṇava Saint describes it as God-madness."

[P. 58. Lectures on Inspiration &c, Part II by Author.]

TOPIC 141.

The outpourings of Saints ; inspired by God.

St. Nammâzhvâr never owned authorship for his Hymnals. He said God seating Himself in him dictated them and he but repeated the same by his mouth after Him.¹ And it is said that God attaches more value to His deliverances when given through the medium of His beloved Saints than his own direct deliverances. To the latter class belongs Bhagavad-gîta, to the former Tiruvâymozhi. "This relative importance was illustrated indeed," says Nambî Tiruvazhudi nâdu Dâsar, "for in all places where people were enlightened as to these matters, when a man who was instructed in Gîta came a-begging to wherë the elders had collected together in the chief places of the thoroughfares, they dismissed him with a handful of rice, and never allowed him a place among them, whereas if a holy soul, itinerant, came across warbling the Hymnal Tiruvâymozhi, the whole town and God Himself rose and advanced to meet him, escort him, assign their own place to him, and treat him with every mark of respect and hospitality."

[Bhag Vish. Bk VII P 3497. "En-Œolh." VII 9 2]

1. (a) St. Terein writes: "I know a person who, without being a poet, has sometimes composed upon the spot stanzas of very exact metre, on spiritual subjects, expressing the pain which her soul felt in certain transports of divine love, and the joy with which she was overwhelmed in this sweet pain." Several among the sacred writers, under the influence of the divine inspiration, delivered the heavenly oracles in verse. St. Francis, (of Assisi) in raptures of love, poured forth the affections of his soul and of the divine presence

sometimes in animated verse. Two such canticles composed by him are still extant. The first begins as follows:—

"Je fero l'amor mi mieo,
 In loco l'amor mi mise &c." =
 "Inn love's furnace I am cast,
 Into love's furnace I am cast
 I burn, I languish, pine and waste
 O love divine, how sharp thy dart
 How deep the wound that galls my
 heart &c."

[Boller's Lives of Saints, Vol. x. p. 116]

(b) Read how Vâlmiki was inspired to deliver Râmâyana &c. &c.

TOPIC 142.

God marks out the saviours of the world

God knows whom to depute as Saviours. He puts His Characteristic mark on them, and inspires them accordingly. Ālavandār was sojourning once during his travels at the Holy Shrine Vishṇu Kāñchi (Little Conjeevaram) and had taken his seat to the East of the Holy Ant Hill, on the steps leading to Kariya-mānikk-āzhvār; when Rāmānuja happened to pass that way. Ālavandār, seeing him, remarked: "There is the Chief Personage." Ālavandār had no acquaintance with Rāmānuja, nor did the latter know him; and yet Ālavandār by insight marked Rāmānuja out as *the* Person,—the anointed and appointed of God to become the Great Religious Reformer of the century. ¹

[Bhag. Viśh. Bk. VII. p. 3499 "Āmudalvan" VII 9-3]

TOPIC 143.

God speaks through His chosen vessels unaffected by their personal

When God inspires His saints, it is He Himself that speaks through them, making use of them but as his mouth-piece. So did Nammāzhvār exclaim. * On this topic says Embār — "If God delivers Himself direct, such gospel is perfectly pure. But if we by personal effort manufacture forth laudatory hymns, they will have their own mark

1 Cp (v) "John the Baptist told the Pharisees and Sadducees — "There cometh after me one mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and loose." [1-7-Mark.] I have baptized you with water; but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." [Ibid: 1-8].

(b) "Peace be to you. As the

Father hath sent me."

[John 11-21].

2. So did Milton exclaim in his last poem:—

"Give me now my lyre,
I feel the stirrings of a gift divine,
Within my bosom blows unearthly
fire,

lit by no skill of mine."

[P: 704. Theosophist Aug. 1901.]

on them as if laboured out by human ingenuity, but when God makes use of us as his own select instruments by which to proclaim His message to men, it is Himself that speaks. Such a Holy Vessel indeed was St. Nam-māzhvār, who thus hymns his gratitude to God for choosing him as His own instrument, and delivering His messages to men there through, untinged by his own impure medium ' 1

[Bhag Vish Bk VII, p. 3501 Appanai "VII-9-4]

TOPIC 144.

Nothing of our own would Ied have but obedience on our side. 7

If we could be our own and if we could really own anything as ours, we could then boast of having something of our own to offer to God as a token of our gratitude to Him for all the plenitude of bounty and benignity which He hath shown us. But nothing have we of our own so to offer. What then is there for us to do? There is but this much. We can do His bidding or do service which he commandeth, and *that*, in His thought, is more than sufficient gratitude. It is like a husband fetching home from the market every article required for cooking; and the good house-wife having but to take care of them, prepare nice dishes out of them and serve to the husband, who thereby becomes pleased. So we souls can claim nothing as our own. God gives us all. We are but His stewards and trustees. We have but to put his things (including our bodies and our souls) to just such use as he

1 Where it is not God, all communications such as those alleged to come through spiritistic mediums are vitiated and carry no authority; nor will their influence last for any time. Not so the

ments.

Gp: (x) "The promise of the Father, which you have heard by my mouth." [Acts. 1-4] "The Holy Ghost spoke before by the mouth of David." [Ibid: 1-16].

wueth And this is service, and service is accepted as sufficient gratitude returned. ¹

[Bhag Vish. Bk : VII, P. 3525. "Iubam " VII-10-1]

TOPIC 145.

How God honoreth His Elect.

In what way doth God specially favour His elect? By endowing them with his Divine Grace, in the way He did to St. Nammāzhvār (by choosing him as His vessel to fulfill a Holy mission on earth) ² Yes; and in the same way, for example, that Lord Râma lavished special graces on Hanumân, the Vânar chief.³

[Bhag Vish. Bk VII, P. 3541 "Malaradi " VII 10-5]

TOPIC 146.

Implicit obedience and faith to masters, works miracles.

Krimikanṭha-Chōḷa (or the worm-necked) was a great hater of Viṣṇu, and embarked on a crusade of sacrilegious iconoclasm ³ But he could not break every Viṣṇu-image with

1. "St. Augustine, in several passages of his works, asks, why God forbade Adam to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; and one of the reasons he gives is, that it was "to teach man how great a good, obedience is of itself, and how great an evil disobedience is." * * * For the sin does not arise from the nature of the thing, but from the disobedience which

always vitiates the act, let the thing be of great or small importance, * * * And therefore God tried him by obedience, which was an act whereby he was not only to acknowledge his Creator, but also to merit, if he had pleased, an eternal union with Him in the end." [Pp 325-6: Vol. 3 "Rodriguez on Christian and Religious Perfection."]

2. [Vide Rāmāyaṇa. V. 61 40 :-

बहुमानेन महताऽनुमन्तमनेक्षत ॥

3. On the destruction of Catholic Images by Leo III, surnamed Isaurinus. "He commanded all the images and pictures to be collected, to be carried to the market place and there burned, all paintings on the

Church-wall to be white-washed, so that no sacred representation might appear." [P 47, The Life of Holy Images by Revd. Dr. L. Maurin. Bombay]

impunity, for his advisers told him that some, like that of Lord, Rāṅganātha, were of specially mystically consecrated class whose demolition would be followed by his own death. He reflected thereon and hit upon the device of appointing a competent sorcerer, who should make himself invisible by applying to his eyes a magical collyrium; then, unseen, he enter into all Viṣṇu's Sanctoria and by his incantations extract all the spiritual power centred in the images by mystic rites. Then he could destroy them after being thus rendered effete. Rāmānuja came to learn of these unholy projects, and going to his Guru Periya-nambi (also residing at Śrīraṅgam) dejectedly said—"God-sire! these rulers of the Eastern lands have begun these unholy depredations. When they reach our Holy Metropolis—Śrīraṅgam— which we have so long guarded, what shall we do?" "I shall", said Periya-nambi, "pace round the Holy Temple,— thus providing a cordon of protection; but could you send a disciple of yours to go with me?"

Ramanuja—"Whom shall I send?"

Nambi—"Him who will simply follow me with no question troubling his mind that he is a second independent man following another man by his own free choice. He must follow me in such submissive will-resigned manner as if he is my very shadow, (i.e., with no thought of self as having an independent will of its own)."

Ramanuja:—"Who is there, indeed, Sire! to answer to this description?"

1 The meaning is that both master and pupil must go to God's service with their wills completely fused into one. The obedience must be not only willing but unquestioning. The following of the disciple should be like the planets moving round the sun, or the satellites round

their planets, or like the binary stars, or shadow with the substance.

Op. (a) - The Queen of France accompanied her holy spouse, St. Louis [like Queen Sitā her Lord Rāma or Saiyughna his brother Rāmarāya, vide Rāmāyaṇa], in his

Nambi "Why, Kūratt āzhvān is such a soul to be sure !
Let him be detailed to me for this service."

[*Bhag* Vṛsb. Bk. VII. p. 354: "Malaradī" vii-10-5].

TOPIC 147

Concealing grace under veil of humility.

Nambīllai left Śrīraṅgam on a pilgrimage to the South—see where Lord Rāma is known, by tradition, to have constructed the famous bridge across the sea to Laṅka. (The Holy Spot where Lord Rāma laid himself down on his Kuṣa-bed to pray the Lord of the ocean to appear to him, is known by the name of Tirup-pallāṇi, (or *Darbhaṅṣayanam*).*) When he visited this Shrine, he, in the fervour of his devotion, recited the Chapter from St. Tirumaṅgai āzhvār's Tirumozhi, bearing on this Shrine (ix-3: "*śāśāṁ*"; ix-4: "*śāśāṁ*") and expatiated thereon in florid

long and tedious voyage, had she been asked where she was going, she would certainly have replied, I go to the same place as the king. I am acquainted with the general plan of his travels, I am not anxious to know the detail, it suffices to be aware, that I accompany the king.
* * * It is he who goes, who undertakes the voyage, and who knows his reasons for doing so, as for me, I do not go, I merely follow." [Love of God by Fr de Sales, Ch. xxi, Bk. i. x].

(b) "To sail, is not to proceed by our own motion, but by that of the vessel in which we have embarked. The human heart may be said to embark when it abandons itself to the will of God, allowing itself to be conducted by this adorable will,

to receive its motion, and not to move itself [Ibid].

(c) It is like an infant at the breast which, being unable to dispose of itself, has no will except to love its mother, on whichever side it is placed, it is satisfied, provided it be in the arms of her whom it loves, and with whom it seems to constitute but one object [Ibid].

1. Cp "The prayer of Faith shall save the sick" [Jam. 5-15] [Also See Matt. xxi-21]

2. "His hands in reverence
Rāma raised

And southward o'er the ocean
gazed.

Then on the sacred grass that made
His lowly couch, his limbs he laid "

[Rāmāyaṇa. vi-21-1 ff].

sermons, carrying the audience with him. The fame of this exposition reached the ears of Nāṇḍīyar,—the Guru of Nambillai,—staying at Śrīraṅgam. When Nambillai returned and fell at the feet of Nāṇḍīyar, the latter exultingly complimented his disciple thus (in figurative language).—

“Son! thy trip to the Holy South Sea has caused waves to beat back as far even as our shores here (Śrīraṅgam)! ”¹ To which Nambillai in humility to his Master, answered thus:—

“God-Sire! how can waves not arise when a person like me, who knows not even where to bathe in the sea, yet ventures to plunge therein and swim?”²

[Bhag. Vish. Bk VIII. p. 3677. “Uraiyâ” viii-3-11].

TOPIC 148.

As God giveth, so he taketh.

It was asked why Lord Kṛṣṇa first de-crowned the tyrant Kamsa before decapitating him? To this, Ammaṅgiy-ammā said —“When it is a royal captive that is to be punished, all his royal insignia have first to be taken down, and then the man, thus un-royaled (if so it may be called), has to be punished.

By mere sufferance, God permits one individual to become king, investing him with a crown and other insignia of royalty, but when it pleaseth God to unmake the king, the course

1. This is figurative, meaning that the renown of his exposition of ‘Tiruvāmōzhi’ made in a distant place like Darbhāmyasāram spread as far as Śrīraṅgam.

2. This is figurative, (meaning that he was not an expert in being able to swim in the vast ocean of God’s bliss; for if he were, he would know the bearings of the ocean and

therefore swim in it without struggling, and therefore creating no disturbance, but being a novice, when he plunged, he lost his bearings, and his helpless strugglings produced so many waves,—the waves thus merely proclaiming his ignorance, but never the consummate knowledge his Master would complimentingly credit him with having.

adopted is to deprive him first of the royal emblems; reduce him to a mere manling and then punish him as he may deserve."¹

[Bhag : Vish. Bk. VIII. p. 3686. "Vārkadā" viii 4 1.]

TOPIC 149.

The Old Law and the New Law, or the Laws of Works and of Faith.

Tiru-chcheṇṇunnūr is a Holy Shrine. In describing it, St. Nammaḻvār speaks of it as a spot peopled with Holy Brāhmaṇas ever performing Vedic sacrifices, the fumes of the sacrifices ascending up to Heaven. A question arose as to how men of the new faith—the Upanishads (or the New Testament of the Āryas) could yet perform ritualistic acts prescribed in the Vedas (or the Ārya Old Testament)—such as the sacrifices alluded to. For the former faith demands the loving sacrifice of the heart to God and this implying surrender of all sublunary delights as well as those of paradise, ordained as rewards for such sacrifices; (the Vedic ceremonial is used as a means to procure these material and temporary joys).² This question was answered thus—The ritual of the Old Law is observed

1. (a) Read *Vishnu Purāṇa* for the story v-20.

(b) Cp: what is mockery the Antichrist Jews did to Jesus — "And stripping him, they put a scarlet cloak (or purple, the sign of royalty) about him (28)." And plaiting a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand. And bowing the knee before him, they mocked him, saying Hail King of the Jews. (29)." "And after they had mocked him, they took off the cloak from him and put on him his own garments,

and led him away to crucify him. (31)." [Matt:]

(c) And (Job) said "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away as it hath pleased the Lord so is it done blessed be the name of the Lord." [Job. I 21].

2. The Old Law is the Religion of sacrificial rituals. The New Law is the Religion of the heart renunciation and love. The Old Law is the symbolic sacrifice of animals. The New Law is the sac-

by the votaries of the New Law merely to prove their obedience to a Divine Decree, but not with a view to reap the rewards attached to such acts of obedience. It is done as conducive to holy discipline and as engaging the mind in holy occupation,—merely performed as a mark of respect for Laws decreed by God: but when they produce effects withal, they would go to the benefit of the world in ridding it of ungodliness. The following is an illustration:—Rāmānuja once resorted to a sacrifice like this in order to get rid of Kṛmīkantha Chōla. For it is chronicled that this Vishnu-hater persecuted Rāmānuja, who in consequence had to leave the Southern country, and go to the uplands of Maisūr to be there beyond the tyrant's reach. He remained here for nearly eleven years, and yet he saw the tyrant still living (like Emperor Leo III, surnamed the Isaurian, who reigned an impious reign for twenty-four long mortal years, as well as his son of similar disposition, Copronymus for 34 ingloriously long years.) Then Rāmānuja resolved on bringing about his death by performing a sacrifice, using spells and incantations invoking Lord Venkatesa of Holy Tirupati for the purpose. When two or three days had elapsed, a stinking smell came from the sacrificial fire as if hair was burning and he at once said:

"Stop the ceremony, the heretic is dead." That same day, a door-keeper of Chōla, by name Veṅgi, poked his master in the neck with his staff. This caused a wound, which became a

rice and complete annihilation of the animal in man. [Read: Brahmarādhā Vol. III, pp. 400 ff on the Vedic Ritual and the Vedānta.].

Cp "I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell on your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them. Neither will I regard

the peace-offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs, for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream. [Amos v, 21-24].

[Read Romans Ch. IV; Luke XV. 4 to 32, and Theo. Germ. P; 62]

loathsome stinking sore full of vermin, and Chola gave up his ghost. ¹

[Bhag. Vish. Bk VIII; P. 3697 "Alladör" VIII-4-5]

TOPIC 150.

God Enamoured of us. Our feeble cry superfluous.

St. Nammāzhvār sang. "Lo! I called aloud to Thee to come and reign in my heart." Tiruk-kurugap-pirān Piḷḷān explained this thus:—"What had I done, that I should have been obliged to call on Him? Did He indeed forget His doting love for us? what then could be the reason for His delay in coming to me? Could it be, that all panting and craving is to be on my side for Him and not on His side for me?"²

[Bhag. Vish. Bk VIII, P. 3773. "Iruttam" VIII-7-1]

TOPIC 151.

The hypostatic relation of the soul to God.

The nature of soul is described to be that which is intelligent (*jñāna*) and blissful (*ānanda*). But these attributes are of little account. What characterizes the soul is its relation of leigeship (as creature) to God the Lord (as Creator)=(*Seshatva*). Once, when Rāmānuja was holding his holy court of religious discussions, this topic came up. Though Rāmānuja was per-

1. Cp. "And forthwith an Angel of the Lord strack him (Herod), because he had not given the honor to God: and being eaten up by worms, he gave up the ghost."

[Acta. xii-23].

2. "The heart of God is passionately enamoured of ours, and our crying for Him is superfluous, but

that we do so is a sign of the fruitfulness of the inclination which He has Himself implanted in us. Cp. "Behold, I stand at the gate, and knock: if any man shall hear my voice, and open to me the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

[Apocalypse iii-21].

fectly informed in the matter, he wished to see the truth expounded by his Guru, Tiruk-kōttiyār Nambī. He called his disciple Kīrattāzhvār, and directed him to go to Nambī and learn from him the truth. He did accordingly journey to Tiruk-kōttiyār, and for six months volunteered at Nambī's. But Nambī condescended not to reveal the secret truths. Kōranātha thereon asked his permission to return to his Guru Rāmānuja when Nambī condescended and said.—“Son, dost thou not know that St Nammāzhvār, who is by God Himself inspired and illuminated, hath said “In me the *rasa*!?” [VIII-8-2 *Adiyēn*]” Kōranātha at once understanding the hint exclaimed in joy — “God-sire, I have now known the truth; I am blessed”; and taking leave of him returned to Srīraṅgam. ¹

[Bhag. Yash. Bk VIII, P. 3804. “*Adiyēn*” VIII-8-2]

TOPIC 152.

A short Treatise on the nature of the Entity called Soul.

God was pleased to give St. Nammāzhvār the experience or realization of the nature of soul as hinted in Topic 151. The saint thus described this experience in T. V. M. viii-8-5:—

1. This truth is the second of the Five Truths as summarized by Yogi S. Parthasārathi Aiyangār in his “*Hinduism*”, 2nd thus:—

(1) “Of God the Lord, (2) of soul, His liege, (3) of grace—the means (4) Of love—the end, and (5) of the lusts that stand between, Both Er’ry Ved, Biography, and Hist’ry teach, And Great Saints—skilled in Ved’s doctrine and practice, preach.” See also Pp 15-16 of his *Tatvatrayam*. “The soul-essence is ... (xiii) disposable for His purposes (*pesha*); and p 24 (*Ibid*):—“By the soul-essence being

“disposable for the Lord’s purposes (*pesha*),” it is meant that, resembling (in respect of perfection of disposability), sandal (or perfume), flowers (plucked), betel-nut and other material objects, which exist, i. e. are prepared, not for themselves at all, but are destined solely for the use of others than themselves, and are consequently designated by Kant as “mere selfless (unconscious) means for the realization of the moral law.” (*Schwiegler*, p. 314) the soul-essence is liable to be disposed of as pleases the Lord &c., &c.”

“செந்த செவ்வை யுதவிதெனச் சரணம் போகா உத வித் தொத்த
 குத்த மொருவன் குதவிதே துதவித் தேவன் எவையித்,
 செவ்வு செவ்வு யகப்பாடல் யாதவித்தித் தேவந்தத்
 செவ்வு தீவெந்தவிதிராய் செவ்வன் யுதவித் உத விதே.”

Trans. “It is not possible to give a description of that wonderful entity, the soul (*ātma*) —the soul which is eternal, and is essentially characterized by intelligence (*jñāna*),—the soul which the Lord has condescended to exhibit to me as His mode, or related to Him as the *predicate* is to the *subject*, or *attribute* is to *substance* (or consonants to the vowel A),—the soul, the nature of which is beyond the comprehension of even the enlightened;—the soul which cannot be classed under any category, as *this* or *that*, —the soul, whose apperception by the strenuous mental effort called *yoga* (psychic meditation) is even then not comparable to such perception or direct proof as arising from the senses conveying knowledge of the external world,—the soul (as revealed to me by the Lord) transcending all other categories of things, which could be grouped as ‘body’ or as ‘the senses’, or as ‘the vital spirit’ (*prāṇa*) or as ‘the mind’ (*manas*), or as ‘the will’ (*buddhi*), because destitute of the modifications and corruptions to which all these are subject: —the soul, which is very subtle and distinct from any of these, neither coming under the description “good”, or “bad.” The soul is briefly an entity which does not fall under the cognizance of sense-knowledge.

Commentary. This verse is a description of the soul, which with reference to God, is somewhat analogous to the description of whiteness which belongs to a white wall or white cloth. The idea that is intended to be conveyed is that the soul is as it were an appendage to the Lord, a dependent (or hypostatic, say) co-existence with the Lord, an attribute to Him, the *Substans.*

(*ātmā caturvṛt* &c.). The soul is a unique Verity distinct from the body, the external senses, the sensory (*manas*) and the reason (*buddhi*). While these are perishable, the soul alone remains apart as the Imperishable.

St. Nāmināzhvār never throughout his T. V. M. Hymnal up to this, bestowed any appreciable attention to the nature of soul, for the reason that all his mind and heart were absorbed in the contemplation of the Lord and His Blessed Attributes, Glory &c., before which soul-nature is like the fire-fly before the Glory of the Effulgent Luminary, the Sun. The Saint had no time to give to *gnosis*, or rational meditation to realise soul-nature, to the detriment of *amor* or emotional devotion to realise God. For as in the manner of the released (or saved) soul, not caring to waste a thought over the painful memories surrounding the embodied state—since abandoned—, the saint who is transported with the revels of his enjoyment with his Lord, the Spouse, never considers it his worth while to waste his time over a search after the inferior kind of soul-knowledge.

The Saint sketches however a knowledge of this inferior nature, because, as a part and mode and predicate of Himself, God was pleased to bestow this knowledge on him.

(*ātmā nāma vāc* &c) The soul cannot be known as *this* or *that*, for all objects of experience are known by the methods of agreement and difference; but no such method is applicable to the *thing* soul.

(*śabdā vācānām* &c)* Neither by speech nor by any process of thought is it possible to disclose the nature of the soul even to those minds who have made great advance in spiritual knowledge.

(*ātmānaḥ G : bhū* &c.)* Even if some knowledge concerning it is had, it is only partial knowledge of it, not knowledge of it in its entirety. Bhagavad-gīta x. 1. 54 declares:

“Arjuna! to know, to see, and to enter into, the true nature of spirit, is difficult.”

(*తెలియఁ దగుదు &c.*). Beyond and beyond, does soul's nature transcend the several vestures veiling it, groupable under the general categorical heads as (1) *anna-maya* (gross body), (2) *prāṇa-maya* (subtle or vegetative body), (3) *mano-maya* (mind-body) &c.

(*యెఱిగఁ దగఁ గలదు &c.*) Not partaking of the nature of any of these categories, nor of the imperfections attaching thereto, the soul stands aloof, as of its own distinct, subtle, species.

(*సఱువఁ దగఁ గలదు &c.*). When a comparison is instituted between one object and another, or as when one material principle of a group is compared with another of another group, notions such as: ‘this is *better* than that’, or ‘that is *worse* than that,’ arise, but soul being a spiritual Principle it is incapable of such comparisons.

(*సఱువఁ &c.*). The soul is thus by itself a singular Verity, and characterised by its own peculiar attributes of intelligence (*jñāna*) and bliss (*ānanda*).¹

[Bhag. Vish: Bk. VIII. p. 3814. ff. “Nimra” VIII & 5]

1. (a) The description of soul-nature as embodied in this short Treatise, is similarly given in St. Mānuka Vāchaka's ‘House of God.’

“*తెలియఁ దగుదు నెఱిగఁ దగఁ గలదు సఱువఁ దగఁ గలదు*” = “Nearer and nearer to Thee it draweth, wearing away atom by atom (its non-spiritual accretions), till it is one with Thee.”

(b) The whole of Section 1 - treating of Soul nature or *chāt* as it is called, - of the treatise, *Tatva-traya*, Engl. translated by Yugi S. Pārthasārathi, must in this connection be studied, in order to learn in a condensed form all about the soul, that otherwise has to be picked up from all the vast lore of the Vedas and the Upanishads.

TOPIC 153.

The degeneration of Modern Times.

St. Nammāḻvār described the Holy Shrine Tirup-puṇyūr as a spot blessed with abundance &c. Bhattar jestingly remarked here —“How could our Saint describe this place as *blessed* when its inhabitants are racked to pay rents and die?” [This is as much as to show what a vast difference it has made between the Saint's time and the time when Bhattārya lived —an interval of about 4000 years! People in our Saint's time, lived in ease, peace and prosperity, but in Bhattārya's time, the Rulers had changed, and had set themselves to tax people heavily and screw and defraud them in various ways, of what little they had and thus impoverish them to the verge of degeneracy, demoralisation and death. Hence peace and plenty having given place to misery and poverty.”]

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. VIII. p. 386]. “Anri” viii-9-10].

I have applied to Religious degeneracy of the Modern Indians, the following from pp. 42-41 of the (Madras) Hindu & Criticism on Dr. J. H. Barrow's claims of Christianity [1897] should be taken to heart by all the young men of Modern India. “It is necessary at all costs to preserve our Ancient Religion (*Sacraua Dharma*) under whose shadow we have so long flourished and have managed to preserve our national integrity unimpaired under all the vicissitudes of fortune that have happened to us. “No nation can part with its religion without destroying its mental continuity and cutting itself off in a fatal way from the sources of its strength.” Let every true-born Indian's heart hug this great truth to itself and profit betimes by retaining its great and

pregnant import. We are often grieved in the inmost depths of our heart to see that young men in India are bewitched by the attractions of Agnosticism and Atheism or Materialism and forget the great scientific Truths of the modern comparative study of Religions. India can only be preserved and raised by faith in her own higher Vedantic Truth.”

Bishop Whitehead in his Address in Bangalore [31st July 1901] on “Education and Religion,” remarked —“No one, I think would seriously challenge the statement that the general result of University Education in India has been to produce a very widespread unsettlement in matters of religious belief and a vast amount of religious indifference.”

TOPIC 154.

The Greatness of God's own Saints

To be liege to God's privileged apostles or saints on earth is declared to be of greater virtue and value than allegiance to God Himself direct.¹ In the days of Bhattārya, one of his disciples who had travelled to the Hoysala country (or Maisūr) returned to Śrīraṅgam. Bhattārya said to him "Son, we have heard that thou hast during thy travel done great service to God's apostles, or God's own men. Thou dost therefore deserve to be taught Śrī Nammālvār's Chapter in Tiruvāymo-zhi, which particularly treats of this topic, viz., of the greatness of God's own saints. [VIII-10. "Nedumāl"]."

[Bhag. Vish. Bk VIII p. 3870. "Nedumāl" VIII-10-1].

1. *Vaḍa Bh. Gītā* with Rāzānawā's commentary thereon by Author VII-13. "The *jaṇai* is to be known as My very soul" *Commentary*. As for the *jaṇai*, I deem him as My own self, i. e. my very life depends on him. If it be asked how, the reason is that in the same manner that he cannot live without Me, I cannot live without Him."

2 (a) It is considered by the *Vīśeṣtādvaitis* that service to God direct is subject to vicimitudes, and liable to forfeiture by His unopposable will, whereas service to God's own saints is safe against such danger. In the contemplation of God's beauty, the blessed are likely to be engulfed so as to

become incapable of service, whereas no such danger is confronted in the service to the Godly. When accepted by the Godly for service, this acceptance is beyond countermanding by God's will, and beyond defeat by His captivating beauty, beyond transport produced by His enjoyment, by which the soul becomes transfixed and incapacitated for service. Service to the Godly has therefore been declared to be the Highest Fruit in salvation, it is the highest ambition one must strive for, not as high is all the worldly riches and prosperity; not the restoration to one's own glory and pristine purity of soul, not possessing, enjoying or even serving God.

Op: (b) Rishi Śāṇḍilya's saying:—

सिद्धिर्भवतिवानेति संशयोऽच्युतसेविना ।

न संशयोऽस्ति तद्वक्तपरिचयोरतत्त्वनाम् ॥

TOPIC 155.

Inordinate affection for wife and children.

Man deceives himself by inordinate affection for wife and children. St. Nammāzhvār says —“these are goods purchased. When purchased, so much of the man's heart twines round them that he even drives his parents out into the street dressed in beggars' rags.” A story is related here—as regards wife—as of recent occurrence. A Brāhman youth spun about from place to place begging for money wherewith to purchase a wife. At last he arrived at Mysore, and was put up in Aho-bil math. He had already collected about 3 to 400 Rupees,

“Service to God direct may end in fruit or not, Service to God's elect, this doubt containeth not.”

(c) “All therefore that we have to consider when we obey, is the will of God, for whether it be declared to us by himself, by an angel, or by any one whomsoever, we are always obliged to a submission to his orders, let the instrument be used to signify them to us be what it will. St. Bernard, discussing this subject, cites St. Benedict's words, which are the same in substance with those already mentioned, “The obedience,” says he, which we render a superior is paid to God, who says, ‘he that hears you hears Me.’ So that whatever be who holds the place of God commands, supposing it to be not evidently contrary to God's will, it is to be received by us as if it came from God Himself. For it is the same thing to know His will either from His own, from an angel's, or from a man's mouth,” St. Bernard also, in the same place, cites a maxim generally admitted by holy

men. “Let it be God Himself or His viceroyal that commands us anything, we must execute it with equal care, deference, and respect, so long as man commands nothing that is repugnant to the law of God.” [Christian and Religious Perfection, p. 377-8 Vol III. Ch: 21 Bk. 7, by Rodriguez].

Read Bhāgavata 1-86-38 to 60 Lord Kṛṣṇa preaching —
“*Brāhmaṇa' te saṅgrahatvā hṛdaya samprāptvā evaṁhy amānā dehyta*”
&c.

(d) “And the king answering shall say to them. Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me.” [Matt. xxv. 40].

(e) “Amen I say to you, as long as you did it not to one of these least, neither did you do it to me.”

[Ibid. xxv.-45].

(f) “Thy holy angels are ordained ministering spirits, and sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.”

[Ephes. i. Ch: viii. Bk. iii.]

giving him full hopes of soon getting a lady to his side. But as luck would have it, he fell ill, grew worse till he was on his death-bed writhing in agony. When good neighbours came to soothe him, and asked what ailed him, he cried out thus,—"Alas! at this dying moment I have not had the blessing of a beautiful young maiden, draped in finery, standing by my pillow and cooling my burning brows with her sweet tears!"¹

As for inordinate love for sons, the story is cited of Śantanu forfeiting his wife Gangā for the sake of his eighth son Bhīṣma, whom he would not allow her—according to his promise to her—to throw into the river, as she had done the seven previously born sons.²

[Bhag' Vish. Bk. IX. p. 3910. "Koṇḍa-pendir" ix 1-1],

1 This event, as one which actually came to his notice, our spiritual

Teacher Śrī Mādhavan-jōḷī, Śrīm-
vāsāchārya related to us.

Cp "नमरिदन्तिगोविन्दं नरकोचरकजेनाः ।

चरमेपि क्षणे साखं दागन्द्दन्तिदुःखिताः ॥"

"The world thinks not of Govinda,
Who would them lift from infer-
num,

The moment e'en when breath is lost
On wires they dote with eyes full
tears.

2. Vide *Mahābhārata* : Ādi 98, 93. Poet : Ch. Roy's Editn.

Cp (a) "नायमानोदरेज्जायां वर्धमानोदरेदनं ।

क्षीयमाणोदरेत्याणान् नारितपुत्रसमारिपुः ॥

(b) "The moment a man gives
way to inordinate" desire, disqui-
tude and torment take possession of
his heart

"The weak in spirit, who is yet
carnal and inclined to the pleasures
of sense, finds great difficulty in
withdrawing himself from earthly
desires, he feels regret and sorrow
as often as this abstraction is

attempted, and every opposition
to the indulgence of his ruling
passion kindleth his indignation and
resentment (Cp: our Dh. pñs, II 62,
63 and Bhāgavata xii-21-19 ff.) [Imi]
Cf: Thomas à Kempis, Ch. vi, Bk.
3

(c) "He that loveth son or
daughter more than me, is not wor-
thy of me." [Mat : x-37].

TOPIC 154.

Divine Service—Three kinds.

Divine service is of three kinds as classified by Kūratt-azhvān —

(1) Like Bharata carrying out the will of Lord Rāma to the exclusion of his own will; or the acquiescing disposition of the heart, which prompts the will to submissively act up to a Divine command, never asking for a reason or questioning its propriety, nor performing it with any selfish hope for requital. This kind of service is what St. Nammāzhvār characterises as that “ of which the depth is only known to those to whom the very performance of the service is itself the reward (or fruit).” (This is a service which is rendered wherever God be pleased to place the servitor, whether in his presence or other wise).

“*azhavarān pēdā āvāṅ*” [T. V. M. viii-10-2].

(2). Like Lakshmana whose service was ever with, and never without, Lord Rāma. Here the servant's own will is *active*, instead of *passive* as in case (1). Service is in this case ever in God's presence, and is done even before a command is given by the master. Lord Rāma for example would have Lakshmana remain in Ayodhyā and not follow him into his exile. But Lakshmana's will was actively opposed to Rāma's will; and he therefore said to Rāma —

“Bereft of thee my life is in peril.

Like fish removed out of wat'ry nill ”

This service is what St. Nammāzhvār characterises as that “ which is rendered to God ever in His company, (not for a moment hearing to be separated from Him) :—

“*āvāṅkūṭi āvāṅ*” [T. V. M. viii-10-10].

(3). Like Śaṭrughna who never thought of serving Lord Râma, but him alone viz., Bharata,—the *servant* of Lord Râma. Whereas Bharata's will was subject to Râma, Śaṭrughna's will was subject to Râma's servant. In his solicitude to be the servant of Râma's servant, Śaṭrughna would think even Râma's presence itself as an impediment to his duty to Bharata. Śaṭrughna thus elected to serve not the Lord directly, but Him indirectly by preferring to serve the Lord's elect. This service is characterised by St. Nammâzhvâr as, "that which is perfectly untinged." Service is said to be tinged when, in the idea of serving God direct and to the exclusion of His Elect, the element of pride enters, viz., the pride that he is face to face with God, and that he is preferred beyond others. This is present *actively* in Lakshmana, *passively* in Bharata, but entirely *absent* in Śaṭrughna¹.

"*Śaṭrughna*" [T. T. M. viii-10-8]

[Bhag: Vish. Bk. IX. p. 3907. "Konda-peṇḍir" ix-1-1].

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Service No (1) may be described as — "the self-will dying to itself and living to God's will." | } called " <i>Prathamam Parva Nishthâ</i> ." |
| Service No (2) may be described as — "the self-will living to itself, and living to will of God." | |
| Service No (3) may be described as:—"the self-will dying to itself and living to God's servants' will." | } called " <i>Charamam Parva Nishthâ</i> ." |

Service No. 1 is described by St. Fr: de Sales thus:—"We can follow the Almighty more amply by allowing ourselves to be conducted without making any exertion—that is, without obliging our will to produce particular and distinct acts to conform to that of God. Then we resemble an infant in its mother's arms, acquiescing simply in whatever God pleases to ordain. That species of simple and general ac-

quiescence may be called union, or, more correctly speaking, unity, because, in the state we treat of, the will of man, morally speaking, forms but one will with that of God." [Love of God: p. 364, Ch: xiv Bk. ix]. This is called by the Viśiṣṭādvaitins "*Pāratantrya*."

Service No. 2 is thus described "We can follow our Heavenly Father in two ways First, by walking alone—that is, making use

TOPIC 157.

How worldlings change sides.

The world looks on poverty with eyes of supercilious disdain. Piṣṭai-Iṭṭamarayaṉ Arayar used to relate thus.—“A man grew rich by the help of a friend. The friend became poor thereby. On account of old friendship, the friend invited the rich man to his house for dinner on a certain occasion. But the rich man would not condescend to come, would not even inquire his welfare, lest by such an act, he might (1) suffer in the estimation of the world as having kinship with a poor man, and (2) lest the poor man rise in its estimation as the “favoured” man by him.”

[Bhag. Vish. Bh. IX p. 3917. “Poruḷ” ix-1-3]

of our own will, and concerning it to H. * * * Thus we practice resignation to the commands of God, which suppresses the marked exercises of our will. * * * In act of my will is necessary, by which I shall conform to the will of God” [Ibid., p. 36-37. Ch. vi, (sk. ix)]. This is called “*Bhāgavat-Sēkhatē*.”

Service No. 3 St Fulgentius used to say —“that those were true religious, who, having sacrificed and broken their own wills, lived in a holy indifference to all things, and gave themselves totally into the hands of their superiors, by neither willing or not willing anything of themselves, but by following their abbot’s counsel and command in all things.” [Page 223, Vol. lii. ch. i 6th Treatise, V. F. A. Rodrigues on Christian and Religious Perfection]. “This is called *Bhāgavat-Sēkhatē*.” [Vide the Lives of Sts. Madhura-kavi and Āndhra-pūrṇa

and The “Loud-word Jewels” by Yogi Parthasarathī. Pp. 34 & Sentences 436-494.]

I Cp. n^o [Job. xix. 13-19]

“My acquaintances like strangers have departed from me.” 13.

“My kinsmen have forsaken me, and they that know me have forgotten me.” 14.

“They that dwell in my house, and my maid-servants have counted me as a stranger, and I have been like an alien in their eyes.” 15.

“I called my servant, and he gave me no answer, I entreated him with my own mouth.” 16.

“My wife hath abhorred my breath, and I entreated the children of my womb.” 17.

“Even fools despised me, and when I was gone from them, they spoke against me.” 18.

[continued on page 179].

TOPIC 158.

Ejaculatory Prayer.

St Nammāzhvār exhorts temporals to at least ejaculatorily call on God's names, which he says is the easiest mental act, attended with neither exertion nor fatigue. Prabhāda, the exemplary lover of God, exhorted his school-mates—the sons of Rāksahas to ejaculate God's names, in doing which he asked.—

"They that were sometime my
counsellors, have abhorred
me and he whom I loved
most is turned against me."

(b) यस्तद्व्येनपदासएवचरगौसृष्टनसम्भन्यते ॥

—"Who, with our foot unworthy was to touch,
Now thinks his foot unworthy for our touch."

or

"Whom *even* *even* with our foot, we would not touch
Now as persons not *even* his foot to touch."

(c) "அந்தவரை வஞ்சித்தவரை
நான் பின் புகைவதானான்"
[1047] Vaḷḷavar's Kara].

—"Poverty maketh *even* nigher
look on her son as some
other."

Dr Pope's Trans

"From indigence devoid of virtue's
grace

The mother *even* that bare, estran-
ged will turn her face."

(d). Cp King Dropadī's answer to Droṇa when the latter sent word to the king: "thy friend is come"; the king, grow wroth, said "great kings can never be friends with such luckless and indigent wights as thou! It is true there was friend-ship between thee and me before,

for we were then both equally cir-
cumstanced. But Time, that im-
pairs everything in his course
impairth friendship also. In this
world friendship never endureth
for ever in any heart. Time wear-
eth it off. * * * Friendship can
never subsist between a poor man
and a rich man &c." Mahā-bhā-
ṭa Parva Ch 122 (Prot Ch:
Bor's Edit).

(e) "Amen I say to you, that a
richman shall hardly enter the
kingdom of heaven." "And again
I say to you it is easier for a camel
to pass through the eye of a needle
than for a rich man to enter the
kingdom of Heaven."

[Matt xxi23-24].

"Supreme!" should ye call Him in morn,

"Kṛishṇa!" should ye call Him in noon,

"Govind!" should ye call Him in eve,

Doth even this cause ye effort? '1.

[Bhag: Vish, Bk. IX. p. 3930. "Maṭraṅgu" ix-1-7].

TOPIC 159.

No gain except God satisfieth.

In the course of singing St. Nammāzhvār's verse "Paṇḍai-nāḷ" [T. V. M. ix 2:1] when he came to the phrase: "Turn Thy sweet eyes on me", Piḷḷai-Tēvap-perumāḷ-Araiyaṛ, dwelt on it repeatedly, when his father Āzhvār rose and said.—"Son, why dost thou by such plaintive appeals, plague the Deity? Hath He not blessed thee with a sweet voice? Hath He not placed at thy disposal such sweet canticles (as those of our saint) thou art singing? Hath He not conferred on thee enough

I Cp "That the mind should ever and anon, both amid business and recreation, be called home for a second or two to the Presence of God dwelling in its dark recesses, this is the meaning of recollectionness of spirit. In days of hard and drudging work, in days of boisterous merriment, in days of excitement and anticipation, it is wonderfully refreshing thus to recollect the mind, and place it consciously under the eye of the Divine Majesty"

"* * "Ejulatory Prayer is Prayer darted up from the heart to God, not at stated intervals, but in the course of our daily occupations

and amusements. * * * As the archer first draws the bow in towards himself, so the Christian retires, by a momentary act of recollection, into his own mind, and there realizes the Presence of God. Then he launches one short, fervent petition into the ear of that Awful Presence, throwing his whole soul into the request. And lo, it is done! The blessing descends, proccutated, overtaken, pierced, fetched down from the vault of Heaven by the winged arrow of Prayer."

[*"Thoughts on Personal Religion"* 11p. 144-145, by Dr E. M. Gaulburn.]

of riches and children? What then hath He not done to thee yet; and what maketh thee then to be so meekly plaintive?"¹

[Bhag: Vish. Bk. IX, p. 3950; "Paṇḍāi naḥ:" ix-2-1].

TOPIC 160.

Divine Dispensations stagger feeble hearts.

Bhaktārya, when he heard the death of Tīrū-narayāṇ-
Arayār * mournfully exclaimed:—"Alas! Lord! Thy irresistible will (in causing us such bereavements), is bearable by such strong-boned souls as Rāmānuja, whose love to Thee can by no kind of visitation shake or flag.² But how canst Thou thus

1. (a) This is indirectly praising the son for his cordial wish to possess God more than every earthly gift He may be pleased to bestow, and secondly recommending patience before God may Himself be pleased to reveal Himself. The spirit of the son's wailing is to be found in Jesus's saying:—"For what doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul? Or what exchange shall a man give for his soul?" [Matt: xvi-26].

(b) Bh. Gita. vi-23. "That gained, no other gain is considered higher, in that firmly aimed, no kind of grief can move."

2. The circumstances attending the death of this martyr are thus related by Periya-Jīyar or Maṇḍarāja-Mahāmenḍal (Saṁs Rāmāyaṇātī-Muṇi. A.C. 1370) in his commentary to Śrī-rachana-Rhāmāyaṇa (vide this work's Engl. trans: by Yogi B. Pārthasarathi Aiyangār, called the Good-word

Jewel):—"Arayār with his family was on a visit to the Holy Lord Veda-Nārāyaṇa, Resident in Tīrū-Nārāyaṇapara. Heretics set fire to the temple. All the inmates ran out from fear. But Arayār's heart, bleeding with love for God, did not permit him to desert the image which was being devoured by the flames. He resolved to remain and die with his God. His sons would not desert their father. So father and sons remained and made a holocaust of themselves to the fire. Cp: "He that findeth his life, shall lose it, and he that shall lose his life for me, shall find it." [Matt. x. 39; also see Luke ix-24, xvii-33; John: xii-25].

3. The reference here is to sorrows borne by Rāmānuja in the days of the heretic Rāya-Chōḍa the "worm-seeked." For, he persecuted the Vaiṣṇavas, demolished their temples and images, deprived Saints like Kūṛattazvān and Periya-naṁbi of their eyes, consequent on

visit me, of weak back-bone? Thy Indefeasible will is fit to be levelled against such stout hearts as that of Rāmānuja, who in spite of any misfortune which may befall, will yet never slack in the least their ardent love for Thee? Rāmānuja alone who is thus fortified by strong faith in Thy dispensations is able to interpret every adverse event that happens, as sent not with an intent to molest creatures but sent as a cure for their sins. But my puny, weak and vacillating heart is no proof to the operations of Thy Powerful Free-will "

[Bhag: Visb. Bk IX, p. 3964, "Puṣṅgudi" ix-2-14].

which the utterexpired; compelled Rāmānuja to leave his beloved shrine, Śrīraṅga, and exile himself to other countries, and yet he himself, though a sinner, was yet given a long lease of life. Bhaktar says that Rāmānuja alone is able with his strong bone and stout heart to bear and brave such reverses, not he.

Cp *Pope's Essay on man* I 10

(v) 'Cease then, nor ORDER
imperfection name.

Our proper bliss depends on what
we blame.

Know thy own point This kind,
this due degree

Of blindness, weakness, Heaven be-
lows on thee.

Submit.—In this or any other
sphere,

Secure to be as blest as thou canst
bear:

Safe in the hand of one disposing
Power,

Or in the natal, or the mortal hour;

All nature is but art, unknown to
thee;

All chance, direction which thou
canst not see,

All discord, harmony not under-
stood,

All partial evil, universal good

And spite of pride, in erring rea-
son's spite

One truth is clear, WHATEVER is,
is RIGHT "

(L) "Oh blind to truth and God's
whole arches below,

Who fancy bliss to vice, to virtue
woe!

Who sees and follows that great
scheme the best,

But knows the blessing, and will
most be blest."

[Ibid: IV-3].

(c) Save me afire from foolish
pride,

Or impious discontent

At aught Thy wisdom has denied,

Or aught Thy goodness lent."

[*Pope's Universal Prayer*. D]

TOPIC 161

The Lord judges by the spirit not by the letter.

Cordiality and humility in the heart when hymning the praises of God is looked for by God; and neither the matter of the hymn nor its manner. In the days of Rāmānuja, his disciples Mudaly-Āṇḍān (= Dāsarathī) and Vāṅḡḡḡ-purattu-Nambi both went to visit Lord Rāṅganātha. There was great gathering there, composed of the high and the low, the learned and the illiterate. Of the two, Nambi took his station by the side of the group of humble cow-herdresses (a Śūdra class inferior to Brāhmins) who had come there; and Āṇḍān as usual joined the ranks of the Śrī vaiṣṇavas, (the high Brāhmin caste). Āṇḍān observing the unusual conduct of Nambi in having joined the low ranks of visitors, queried him “ Brother! how is it thou hast left our high-class group and joined with the ranks of the low-caste women? ”

Namb: "We are swelling a bit with the pride of our high caste; these creatures are humble and ignorant. It struck me that according to the text: "Nor caught a look from Râma's eye,"¹ the Lord would be pleased to look more graciously on the low and humble rather than on those puffing with pride of caste, learning &c. Hence I took my place with them."

Andan "Then pray tell me what all they did say, and what thou didst say."

Namō. " They, in their own unlaboured and unvarnished rural tongue, praised the Lord thus. ' Dear Lord, do thou drink milk ' do thou eat fruit ' do thou wear warm robes &c. ' 2 and I, in my usual learned and high-sounding Sanskrit addressed the Deity as, ' Victory be to Thee, Victor be Thou ' &c. 3

1. Vite Rimovana 17 14

2. Original "பாதுகாப்பை, பழக்கவழக்கை, உடையதே, அழகுறப்படுகிறது. அப்படியே, அழகுறப்படுகிறது. அப்படியே, அழகுறப்படுகிறது."

3. Original "Vijayava, Vināṭi-bhava."

Aṇḍān: "Well, brother, even in their ranks thou didst not think of dropping such stiff Samskrit! We are we, and they are they, howmuchsoever thou mightst forget and conceal our differences. Come, join our ranks as usual."¹

[Bhag: Vish. Bk. IX, p. 3977 "Eṅgaḥ" ix-2-8].

TOPIC 161.

How endearing to Heart are Holy Names.

Kōyilāyttān was a disciple of Bhattārya. He had a son whom he named Bhattārya out of love for his Holy Teacher. The son died however, and Āythān was inconsolable in his grief; he came and cast himself at Bhattar's feet bemoaning his loss. Bhattārya consoled him thus: "Son! grievest thou for thy son, because he bore my name which is so dear to thee? Then grieve not, for do I not, of that same name (so dear to thee), live for thee?" So saying he got an image made like himself, and bestowed it on Āythān as a Holy souvenir, (on which to lovingly dwell, as before he did on his son).

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. IX. p. 3995: "ōrāyiram" ix-3-1].

Ep: " भक्तोवदतिविष्णाय सुक्तोवदतिविष्टवे ।

नतयोऽन्तरं ह्यस्ति भावभाव्यो न नार्दनः ॥

"Vishṇāya' says, th' Illiterate,
Says 'Vishṇave' the literate;
No difference between them, soon
The Lord, who their hearts alone sees".

1. Ep: (a) "This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me." [Isai: xxix-13].

(b) Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, he is the greater in the kingdom of heaven." [Matt. xviii-4].

(c) Blessed are the poor in spirit."

[Luka: vi-20].

(d): "Lo the poor Indian ' whose
imitator'd mind
Sees God in clouds, or hears him in
the wind;
Disseal, proud science never taught
to stray
Far as the solar walk, or milky
way."

[Pope's Essay on Man Epistle 1]

(e) "My son, give me your heart"

[Prov. xxiii-26]

TOPIC 163.

The Beatific Vision throwing saints into ecstasy

A ten-day Festival is often celebrated in our Holy Temples. On the Preparatory Day to the first day, Vishvakséna, the Archangel, goes in procession through the streets to see that they are clean, free of obstacles and duly decorated &c., for the reception of the Lord coming in procession on the first day following, which is called the "Flag Hoisting" day (*Dhvaj-ārōhṇa*), when Angel Garuda's (herub) picture painted on canvas is consecrated, taken in procession and hoisted aloft the high altar pillar (*Dhvaja-stambha*) which is permanently planted in front of the Holy Shrine. Nambūllai used to relate of his Guru Nāṇjiyar that he (the latter) went into raptures over St. Nammāzhvār's Decad beginning "மேல் தாங்கி" (Lord! Thy hand decked with the Discus &c., *T. V. M. IX. 1*) in which our Saint refers to God having deigned to reveal Himself to him in spite of his insincere and ungrateful heart which Decad Nāṇjiyar happened to recite on the Preparatory Day. The Lord's Image on that day is most beautifully ornamented, — the salient feature of the adornment being the wearing of the Holy Basil (*Tuḷasi*) Wreath (*Vaijayanti*), which in Vaishṇava Symbology is Lord Viṣṇu's Sovereign insignium indicating His Universal Lordship. This specially embellished Figure of the Lord served as the sensible object for Nāṇjiyars contemplation which, coupled with his cordial reflections over the sense of the above-cited Decad, sent him into transports of joy. On the following first day (aforesaid) when he recited St. Nammāzhvār's Decad IX 3, verse 5 "Maname", when he came to the passage therein "Lord! wreathed in cool sweet basil, Peerless Thou art," his memory ran back to the Beautiful Figure in basil-wreath, on which he had contemplated the previous day, and he exclaimed "Like this, or like the Lord who appeared to St. Nammāzhvār in Decad

V 1, he is coming to us wreathed in basil'. All this shows how much love and condescension God manifests towards his creatures regardless of their baseness and insignificance. :

[Bhag: Vish: Bk. IX. P: 4009: "Maname" ix. 35]

L (a) Through images, Saints have realised the Beatific Vision of Divinity. According to Visishtadvaita, God *essential* is embodied in Attributes, Person and Glory. By grace, endowed with spiritual sight, the transcendent Vision of God as He is, is realised in His representations, the Images. Manas he is constituted can only gather ideas from sensible objects; and such a thing as an idea of the *other* as God is impossible, without the embodiment thereof by Person, Graces and Glories, the Person revealing the others by its medium. A *sensibile* representation to the mind is the most natural, and the stopping-stone in the ladder to higher meditations. Yogi S. Parthasarathi embodies this truth as contained in Bhagavata 10-37 (*satram* &c.), in the following verse —

"Siva" had this Thy Pure Form
not been,

Gloom-breaking wisdom couldn't
exist.

Through quantities man's feet, Thou
art known,

And *there* Thy Form makes mani-
fest "

[P 148 *Tatva-traya*].

Cp: (b) "Lastly, we may think of Our Lord in *human form* looking down upon our probation from the Heavenly Throne."

["Thoughts on Personal Religion" by Goulburn].

Max Muller in the Preface to his *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, P: x: remarks thus:—"What is most curious is that a philosopher, such as Shankara, the most decided monist, and the upholder of Brahman as a neuter, as the cause of all things, is reported to have been a worshipper of idols and to have seen in them, despite of all their heterogeneity, symbols of the Deity, useful, as he thought, for the ignorant even though they have no eyes as yet to see what is hidden behind the idols, and what was the true meaning of them."

A Christian writer, Frances Lord,—we were struck to find, writing thus:—"The white man does not make a wooden idol and call it his god, burning incense to it, making its advice, praying its protection; but is he any nearer getting conscious help out of his notion of a "God who is spirit," than the savage whom he pities so much, gets out of his wooden image?"

[P 5 *Christian Science Healing*].

(c) Form captivates men's hearts more than anything. All ecstasies had Visions of God in Form. Lactetia of Arcione tells us 'that she could perform greater wonders on the human heart by the dexterous management of her personal charms, than all the philosophers,

TOPIC 164.

Service to Jed the Highest End of man.

What constitutes the highest spiritual ambition of man? Possession of God. What does this imply? Absolute submission to Him. What again does this imply? Doing to our Lord and Master, eternal service as becometh a liege and servant to Him, as befitting the eternal tie subsisting between Him and His creatures. This ultimate solution of the Problem of Life is enunciated in a verse which Nambūllai used to repeat.

आत्ममहिमानानुगुणपुरुषार्थव्यवस्थया ।

भगवत्पारतंत्र्यादिप्रबुद्धस्यसुखायते ॥

"That soul indeed has reached bliss,

Which hath its nature realized

Its nature :—'Dependence on God',

Its end 'eternal service to Him.'"

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. IX. P: 4037. "Cruvadu" ix. 4 f.]

astrologers, alchemists, necromancers, sorcerers, and witches, of the known or unknown world, could by their cunning practices effect "

["Burton's Melancholy Anatomized" p. 102, Ch. vi.]

(d) In one of his most loving letters to me, that d. 11th August 1900, my Guru, Yogi S. Parthasarathi enlightens me thus. "The Divine Figure is the centre of gravity of Heaven. Just as the magnetic needle is ever attracted towards the pole, all the universe is ever attracted towards it as its absolute centre of gravity." Speaking of the *Vigrahas* (Forms, Form) of God, Shashir Kumar Ghose says :—"These Forms were we believe presented to the minds of the saints, who longed to see Him.

[Vol II Lord Gauranga. p. 6. Pro. [here.]

1 Cp. (c) "Oh, that I were able to serve Thee all the days of my life; that I were able to serve Thee truly, though but for one day! Thou art everlastingly worthy of all service, all honour and all praise! Thou art my gracious Lord, and I am Thy poor vessel, under infinite obligations to serve Thee with all my strength and perpetually to celebrate Thy glorious name. To do this is the sole wish and desire of my heart, and whatever ability is wanting in me to accomplish it, do Thou in much mercy supply."

"Oh, happy and honorable service, that makes man truly free

TCPIC 185.

Service, sooner than love, to God excites His Grace.

To be more of the character of a servant is better fitted to win the master's mercy than to be objects of love like children to their father. Children but inherit portions of the master's property but servants become objects of his strong affection. The former is but a material gain, whereas the latter is a superior spiritual gain. Once, Pillai Akalan̄ka-Brahma-Rāya (the disciple of Kuratt āzhvān) unwittingly offended his Guru's scion, the holy Bhattārya. Bhattārya in consequence left Srīraṅgam for Tirukkōtṭiyūr. Rāya was anxious to conciliate with Bhattar. For this purpose he thought of mediating with him through one Irukai-mada vāraṇan—weaver in chief to Lord Rāṅga—whom he knew to be a most intimate servant of Bhattārya. He was despatched on the peace-mission. The servant opportunely plied Bhattar with coaxing language, which pacified and pleased him so much as to deign to forgive Rāya. Observers remarked to Bhattar what an exemplary servant Vāraṇan must have been to bring about an event like this? To which Bhattar said.—“No wonder.

and truly holy.' Oh, blessed privilege of filial adoption, that numbers him with the family of heaven, makes him equal to the angels, and renders him terrible to evil spirits and delightful to all that are sanctified. Oh service for ever to be desired and emulated, in which alone we can recover the divine life we have lost and enjoy the supreme and everlasting good.”

[Init: Ch: Thomas à Kempis Ch. viii. Bk iii].

{b} “Where shall we find a man that is wil. ng to serve God *gratis*?” [Ibid].

(r) Service to God is not servility nor is it forced as in the case of worldly service. It is a service full of delight flowing from love. This question is dealt with in sentence 53 of Lokichārya's Mamukshappadi; 1st Division, “The Blessed Mantra.” Says Seneca ‘Parere Deo libertas est’=‘To obey God is true liberty.’ Read Dr F. W. Faber's Creator and Creature. Ch. III Bk. I Pages 93 E. Yogi S. Parthasarathidefinessalvation, “to be the state of eternally doing, with cheerful devotion, God's will alone.”

[Tatva-Traya, P 188]

He is a born servant, (i. e. His very nature is made for service) which conquers all."

[Bhag Vish : Bk. IX. P. 4051-52 "Adiyân" ix. 4-10].

TOPIC 166.

To love-learn saints, to forget God is impossible.

In moments of desertion by God, the anguish of the heart becomes insupportable, and solace is sought for by diverting the mind to seek fellowship with things abounding in created nature. But in thus seeking forgetfulness, the very things chosen for diversion serve to prove as incentives to remind of God. In such a love-smitten mood did our saint⁴ Nammâ-zhvar carol a lay as follows, addressing a kôkila bird —,

[*Ṭāṣṭṭ*] "Hark, Kôl-bird! distress thou not my soul,
By thy and thy consort's cooings of love.
For ye bid not my soul's Lord, Kṛṣṇa, come;
Thou Bustlest so to rape my soul for Him?"²

[T.V.M : ix-5-1. "*Ṭāṣṭṭ*"].

1. The black or Indian Cuckoo, <i>Cuculus Indicus</i> .	And loved their notes of triumph around
2. Cp Rāṇḍyaṇa ix (Kṛṣṇakṣā- hā). 1st canto.	Here in his joy the Kôl. sings.
"Hark, the loved kôl swells his throat.	There the glad wild-cock flaps his wings.
And mocks us with his joyfull note.	The blooms of bright Aśokas where The song of wild lilies fills the air, And the soft whisper of the boughs Increase my longing for my spouse.
I hear the happy wild-cock call Beside the shady water-fall. His cry of joy afflicts my breast By love's absorbing might posses- sed.	Each bird is happy love elate, Rejoices with his darling mate, But sighs like these of joy and peace
Each bird his kindly mate has found	My pangs of hopeless love increase

The whole of this Decad (ix-5) was a favourite with our Lord Rāmānuja. For once a misunderstanding arose between him and the Temple minstrel-in-chief—Āzhvār Tiruvarangap-perumāḷ Araiyar,—owing to which, he discontinued visiting the Temple (of Raṅganātha, Śrīraṅgam). Araiyar was anxious to appease Rāmānuja, and he contrived to send tidings to him on a certain day that in the Temple, the above-cited Decad was being conducted as service that day. Rāmānuja instantly rose and attended the service. Peace was thus re-established. So much was his love for this Decad.

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. IX. P. 4059. "Iṇṇuṇṇi" ix. 5].

TOPIC 167.

Insatiable Love to God.

Amorous of God, St. Nammāzhvār warbled out a ditty such as the following:—

“As dote I on the Lord of Katkarai,
Whose streets with scarlet lily are perfum'd,
My heart for His wonderful Graces melts
How then can I, my restless love suppress?

[T. V. M. IX. 6. 1].

A question rose as to whether the Decad beginning with this ditty imports the ravishment ensuing from the Saint's union with his Lord or it is simply a mere love-effervescing of the heart proceeding from its absorbing contemplation of His graces? Saint Ājavandār decided that it is not the outcome of a dual blissful union with Lord as in "Iruttum" (20722. viii. 7. T. V. M.), but is only past bliss now memorized by fresh contemplation of His attributes;—from which however is not

absent a veiled disappointment consequent on the absence of actual union.¹

[Bhag. Vish : Bk IX, P 4093. "Urugum" ix.6.1]

TOPIC 168.

Possessing the soul in patience for realising God.

Sitrâṅkondan said —"Between realizing God in actuality and His presenting Himself to our inward imagination only, when we meditate on Him, is a long distance. To wish for the former consummation at the very outset or as soon as the heart begins in the first instance to bloom for him, is like opening a shop and making announcements to the public that clothes are ready for sale while yet the cotton is lying raw in its pod on the tree."²

[Bhag. Vish : Bk IX ; P. 4139. "Telī-viṣumbu" ix.7.5]

1 Cp "Thou heart, that cannot rest,
Shall thine for ever prove,
Though bleeding and distress'd
Yet joyful in thy love."

[Madame Guyon].

"Flames of encircling love invest,
And pierce it sweetly through
'Tis fill'd with sacred joy yet press'd
With sacred sorrow too."

[Ibid.]

2 Cp Protestant Theologians draw this distinction between the *just man* and the *saint* "The *just man* or man who has been justified, obeys the precept of Jesus when He saith, 'Come to Me'. The *saint* or man who has been sanctified, goes one step further. He answers to the invitation which says, 'Abide in me and I will abide in thee.' [The Psychology

of the Saints, by H. Joly] Cp: our Bh Gītā. with Rāmānuja's Commentary Verses. 28 & 29 of Adāyāya ix. Also consider the several stages of the Godward pilgrim concisely described in xi. 54. *Ibid*

(a) Mrs. A. B. writes under date 23rd Jan. 1900, Coconada :—"Impatience blurs the sight. Give time for the heart-lotus to open. You destroy it when you try to tear its leaves apart. Have courage, poor bleeding son; the light will come."

(b) 'Thou wouldest not seek Me if thou didst already possess Me. Therefore do not be uneasy when I seem still far off.'

[Selections from Pascal's Thoughts, by H. L. S. Lear p 59].

TOPIC 189.

A moment's absence of God is an age of pang to love-lorn Saints.

In their progress towards God, saints pass through various stages of love. They languish with love in His absence, and resort to competent messengers (spiritual guides qualified to intercede with God) to fly to Him and pour before Him the song of their sorrow at His desertion and the tidings of the flame consuming them. The messengers depart, but during the interval caused by their absence, the lovers will not endure but plaintively burst forth again with cries of, "when shall we join Thee, Lord, again?" Nor doth it stop here. The time seems magnified into eternities, and every object which some time before contributed to give pleasure to sense and mind, seems like an instrument of torture wantonly designed to aggravate the lover's sufferings. ¹ Nambi Tiruvaraṅga-Nārāyaṇa-Dāsar, a disciple of Nambūṭṭar, attended the latter's lectures on Love to God, based on St. Nammāḻvār's Holy Hymnal, the

1 Cp (a) Bhartṛ-hart:

विश्र.यविश्रम्यवनदृपाशं

उषासुतन्वीनेश्चारकाचिन् ।

स्तनोत्तरीयेनकरोध्वतेन

निशयन्तीशशिनोपयूखान् ॥

=The love-stricken maiden would
in the moonlight sit in the shades
of trees, and try to avert the (to
her) scorching rays of the moon by
shading herself with her garment.

(b) "In vain ye woo me to your
harmless joys,

Ye pleasant bowers, remote from
strife and noise;

Your shades, the witnesses of many
a vow,

Breathed forth in happier days, are
irksome now;

Denied that smile 'twas once my
heaven to see,

Such scenes, such pleasures, are all
past with me."

[Madame Guyon].

(c) Cp " क्षणविनेयद्विरहोऽतिदुःखः ॥

[Stotra-Ratna. १-63]

Tiruvâi-mozhi. Petri was a disciple of Nāṇḍīyar, the Master of Nambīllai. Dâsar happening one day to visit Petri, the latter asked what delightful discourses he heard that day from Nambīllai. 'This day,' said Dâsar, 'we have completed the Hymn "Arukkum" [T.V.M. ix-8], descriptive of the (said) Saint's aspirations to join God. Dâsar said 'The next Hymn, "Malligai" [T.V.M. ix-9] will reveal to you a novel feature in the Saint's pangs of love, when in the small space of an evening, he doth suffer an age of anguish.' "Ālavandâr explained,"—so taught Tirumālay-āṇḍān—"that the saint suffered as much, as in a night the cowherdesses of Brindāvan suffered, owing to Lord Krishna's deserting them." "No," interrupted Rāmānuja (disciple of Āṇḍān), "say rather that in the *small* space of an evening, he suffered all, for, how could so love-lorn a Saint as Nammāzhvār have had strength enough to keep him alive in his pang of separation for (to him) an eternally long night?"

[Bhag : Vish Bk. IX. 4178 ; "Malligai" ix-9]

TOPIC 170.

Mind fickle and lustful.

To curb the fickle and lustful nature of the mind is the greatest feat a mortal can perform. While men like Purūravas made great sacrifices for obtaining houris of paradise for carnal enjoyment, Arjuna, when the beautiful Nymph Urvashī, of the Immortals, stood before him in all the attractiveness of her charms and wooed him for intercourse, had the strength of mind to resist the temptation, and even to cast himself at her feet worshipping her as his mother ¹. Even he however complained to Lord Kṛishṇa [in Bhagavadgīta : vi-34] as follows :—

1 (a) This story may be read in Mahā-Bhārata, Vana-Parva xlv-19.

The following stanza is to the

point: (the very opposite of which, of how a weak-minded creature easily goes mad with women in

"Slayer of Madhu ! yet again, thus Yog,
This Peace, derived from equanimity,
Made known by Thee—I see no fixity
Therein, no rest, because the heart of men
Is unfixed, *Kṛishṇa* ' rash, tumultuous,
Wild and strong. It were all one, I think,
To hold the wayward wind, as tame man's heart."

[Bhag. Viśh. Bk. IΛ. P. 4236. "*Mālai-nāṅṇi*" ix 10-1]

found in the story of Puruṣataṅṇa Pur 17-5]. The stanza referred
(or Vikrama) and Uraṇi [Viśh: 16 19 -

दृष्ट्वैवचोर्वाग्निप्राप्तांलज्जावृत्तिनिरोधनः ।

पादाभिषेदनंकृत्वागृह्णन्नाप्रयुक्तान् ॥

(6) Op: Venkatādhri Svāmī, a great Vaishṇava devotee, of whom many miracles are related, and who lived about A.C. 1870 in Śrīraṅgam, was once in Kanchi (Little Conjeevaram) on a visit to the Holy Lord Varadarāja. He lived a celibate hermit's life. He was in full vigour, youth and health. The rāghondas of the place sent the best beauty of the place to seduce him so as to violate his chastity when he should be asleep. She, on a pleasant moonlight night, came rigged out in all her flaccy and perfume; and prepared with every art, which only a harlot knows how to ply to ensnare men's minds. She set at work all her infamous engines to assault his virtue. The Svāmī, as soon as he saw her phantom, imagined it to be the Mother of the Universe—the Consort of Varadarāja—come there in answer to his prayers and to bless him. He danced before her for joy with songs of praise tuned to his lyre, (his constant companion.)

[Vile His Life in Telugu by S. Rāja Rao Nāyudu Śrīnikṛṣṇa Press Madras; 1897]

(c) Once St. Bernard happened to fix his eyes on the face of a woman, but immediately reflecting that this was a temptation, he ran to a pond, and leaped up to the neck into the water, which was then as cold as ice, to punish himself, and to vanquish the enemy. On another occasion, an impudent woman assaulted him; but he drove her out of his chamber with the utmost indignation. [Butler's Lives of Saints Vol. vii; P. 289].

(d) "In the beginning of his conversion, finding himself assailed with violent temptations of concupiscence, he (St. Francis Assisi) often cast himself into ditches full of snow." [Butler's Lives of Saints, Vol. 1. P. 108]

(e) "They secretly introduced one of the most beautiful and most bewitching young strumpet of the

TOPIC 17L.

The Passion-Crisis of the heart for God.

Nāṇḍiyar asked Bhaṭṭārya : — ‘ God-sire ! how is it that Saint Tirumaṅgai Āzhvār calls on the Lords of many Holy Places—all of them in a single centum of his great Hymnal [viz., *Pēriya Tirumozhi*. 10-1 “ *Oru Napchutram* ”.] ?

Bhaṭṭārya “ Son ! knowest thou not that when a damsel is given in marriage, a time comes when she must leave her parental roof for that of her husband ? And that before her leaving the roof of her parents, in-order to go to the mansion of her husband, she must go to *all* her relations and friends to take leave of them ? So doth our saint, when his time for departing to heaven approached, take leave of all the Worshippable Lords manifest in many Shrines on earth, who were the means of kindling and nourishing his love for God in Heaven.¹

[Bhag. Vish, Bk. X P. 4265. *Kedum idar* ” x 2-1]

country into his (St Thomas Aquinas) chamber, promising her a considerable reward in case she should draw him into sin. She employed all the arts of Satan to succeed in so detestable a design. The saint, alarmed and affrighted at the danger, profoundly humbled himself, and cried out to God most earnestly for His protection, then snatching up a firebrand, struck her with it, and drove her out of his chamber.” [Butler's *Lives of Saints*, Vol. iii. P. 62]

(f) Read *Embers of Gorinda-Jiyar's Life in Guruparajayoppanishad*, (D V.) to be English translated.

1. This is like the extraordinary death of a gentleman dying of love on Mount Olivet, after his visiting all the Holy Places in Jerusalem,

with his heart deluged in love, related by St Francis de Sales in Ch. xii, Bk. vii. of his *Treatise on Love of God*.

(b) Arent *Form of God as Images Worshipable*, or *Archavatara*, the reader is referred to the Learned *Tattva-traya* by Yogi S. Pārthasarathi Pp. 143ff. *Archavatara* or *Image-Worship* has for us the following advantages — (1) It is reachable by our senses and the mind, (2) Hence it produces a desire for godliness, (3) As soon as such a desire is produced, it at once serves as Means to lead us to the apogee of spiritual greatness, (4) it serves to inspire the virtues of piety and love for God, and (5) it gives us an opportunity, even while we are in the midst of our world-enemy to practice service, which we aim

at performing in reality when we reach Heaven and there are face to face with God!

(c) Our Saint Nammāzhvār had—while he contemplated on the manifestations of the Lord in His

Worshippable Form at several Holy Places—presented to his consciousness the several auspicious attributes of God as Holy subjects for his meditation, thus:—

Name of the Holy Shrine & of the Lord.	Aspect and Attribute meditated on
1. Śrīrāgam or Kōṭi (Lord Rāṅganātha).	Love of God to man by condescending to emanate from his Vyāsa mate (vide note on Kshīrābdhi, Intro. to Holy Lives of Drāvida Saints.)
2. Tīru-malai or Tirupathi (Lord Venkaṭeṣa).	The Lord as indwelling in all hearts.
3. Tīrak-karugūr (Lord Ādinātha).	As the Universal Lord.
4. Tīrak-karuṅguḍi (Lord Nāṁbi in 5 postures)	As representative of Avatāras (=Vibhava).
5. Śrī varamaṅgalam. (Lord Daivānāyaka).	As Holy Feet, our Means of salvation.
6. Tīrak-kuḷandai (Lord Śarāṅga-pāṇi).	As the Lord melting the hearts of those who have renounced all minor gods.
7. Tīru vallavāṣṭh (Lord Kōṭap-pirāṇ).	As Sole Protector.
8. Tīru-vaṇ-vaṇḍūr. (Lord Śeṣha-śyā).	As the Lord who guards the heart from all the temptations and attractions of the world.
9. Tīru-vaṇḍu nāgaram. (Lord Uppiliyappan).	As the Lord who by His power affords solace for pining hearts, and renders them fit for service.
10. Tīrut-talai-vīḷi-māṅgalam. (Lord Aravinda-lochana).	As Father and Mother multiplied.
11. Tīrak-kōḷur. (Lord Nukshapa-vitta).	As a place which, to souls aspiring for God, lends itself as the most agreeable place for residence.
12. Tea-tirup-pāṇai. (Lord Makarīyala-Karupāra).	Love-inspiring Beauty.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 13. Tiruvāraṇ-vēlai (Lord
Tiruk-kural-appan). | } Beauty such as prevents the mind tumbling to any other heaven. |
| 14. Tiruk-koḷandai,
(Lord Māyak-kūttan). | } Captivating Beauty such as will embolden the soul to set the world's opinions at naught. |
| 15. Tiruvap-paruvāram.
(Lord Tiruk-kural-appan). | } Tenderness which makes the soul forget fatigue. |
| 16. Tiruch-chaṅṅuṇṇūr.
(Lord Imaiy-avar-appan). | } Manliness which drives away all dread. |
| 17. Tiruk-kaḍittānam.
(Lord Adbhuta-Nārāyaṇa). | } Love, as between parent and child, permitting familiarity. |
| 18. Tirup-paliyūr
(Lord Māyap-puān). | } The love of the bridegroom for his bride. |
| 19. Tirup-poḷṇṇuḍi (Lord
Kāyēṇa-vēṇḍan). | } The Three Holy Places where the Lord evokes in the devotee the three stages of love known as <i>Para-bhakti</i> , <i>Para-jñāna</i> and <i>Parama-bhakti</i> . |
| 20. Tiru varaguṇa-maṅṅai.
(Lord Vijayāsana). | |
| 21. Tiru vaikuṇḍam.
(Lord Vaikuṇṭha-mātha). | |
| 22. Tiruk-kāṭkarai (Lord
kāṭkaray-appan). | } Closest intimacy and abandon, in delights of union. |
| 23. Tiru-mūshikkalam,
(Lord Tiru-mūshikkaḷattān). | } As the Anyāta Regal to all supplicants. |
| 24. Tiru-nāṇṇy
(Lord Nārāyaṇa). | } Mercy and Grace to the devotees. |
| 25. Tiruk-kappapuram.
(Lord Śaṅka-miṇa) | } As Saviour and Heaven-Grantor to all refugees. |
| 26. Tiru-mōḡār.
(Lord Kīḷameḡā). | } As cool and refreshing to those scorched in the heat of the world. |
| 27. Ananta-payanam.
(Lord Ananta-padma-nābha). | } As the Lord Impartial to all creatures. |
| 28. Tirumālirai-jōṭai.
(Lord Ashagar or
Sundarabāhu). | } As Dispeller of Ignorance. |
| 29. Tirup-pār-nagar.
(Lord Appak-kaḍattān). | } Willingness to accept all comers.
dx. dx. dx. [P. T. O.] |

TOPIC 172

Unswerving Fidelity to One God.

Fidelity to one God cannot permit violation of that virtue by dividing the heart to other gods. God is so jealous that He will permit even non-fidelity to Himself than suffer fidelity, due to Him alone, being transferred to others. Once Lord Rāṅganātha was carried in procession, when it began to rain. He was, for shelter, carried into the premises of another temple—dedicated to some other divinity—at Kizharyūr (Jambukeśvara near Srīraṅgam). Rāmānuja and other elders who had accompanied the procession, stopped away outside the premises and in the rain, when some one addressed him thus.—“Sire! Thy Lord has taken shelter inside, why dost thou not do the same”? “Fool thou art,” fulminated Rāmānuja, “if the Emperor electeth to make love to a courtesan, doth it signify that His chaste Queen also should imitate her Lord by herself resorting to a courtier? (We are like the chaste Queen and cannot do as the Lord doth).”¹

[Bhag. Vish: Bk: X, P. 4299. “Kedum” x-2-1].

Cp: With the Table of the 32 Upa-niṣad Fidyas in our Bhagavad-Gītā which refer to God's Attributes.

(4) “Through His Attributes we can reach Him, touch Him, feel Him; to Him our aspirations can rise, our hearts can be at His Feet. Now an idol is an image which shows symbolically some attribute, or group of attributes of the Supreme, some Person in whom His attributes are seen. Thus an idol of Viṣṇu is blue,—the color of the over arching sky—has four arms, one for each quarter of space, bears the conch for creative sound, the mace for sovereignty &c.”

[Annie Besant on Idolatry p. 65. Hindu College Magazine Vol. I.]

1. Cp. “God sets so high a value and esteem upon this holocaust of our heart, that it is the very one thing precisely He demands of us. “My son,” says he, “give me your heart.” (Prov. xiii. 20.) As the eagle, the prince of birds, feeds only upon the heart, so what God most regards is the heart—and in case you bestow not this upon him, it is not in your power to bestow any other present which can give him satisfaction. Nor is it indeed any great thing he demands of us. For, if we, who are but dust and ashes, cannot be fully satisfied with all things God has created, and if there is nothing, except God alone, can fill this

TOPIC 173.

God Himself the fulfilment of His Law.

On a certain occasion, Lord Raṅganātha was taken out in procession, in imitation of the exploit of a King going out on a hunting excursion. It was now evening by the river-side, when it was time for the Twice-born (Brāhmanas) to retire for evening Prayer (Sandhyā). When a few announced their intention to Bhāṭṭārya to leave the procession and go for the Evening Prayer, Bhāṭṭārya was immersed in ecstatic contemplation of the Lord, beautifully manifest in His Image. On being pressed again, he petulantly observed.—“Brothers! supposing we depart a bit from the punctual rigid observance of our sacerdotal routine, inasmuch as our present occupation, viz. of meditative attention to our Sovereign Himself here visibly present, answers it—or in other words, supposing we forego the Law inasmuch as we are occupied with the Law-Giver Himself—do ye therefore think that Yama, the God-appointed Punisher of the breakers of that Law, will accuse us as Law-

breakers of ours, as little as it is, how do you imagine you can satisfy God in giving him but a part of your heart, and reserving the rest to yourself? To pretend this, is only to abuse Him, since our heart cannot be divided in this manner. “For the bed is so narrow,” says Isaiah, “that the one or the other must necessarily fall out and the cloak so short that it cannot cover both at once” (Isa. lxviii-20). The heart of a man is a narrow bed, it cannot contain any, besides God alone. And it is for this reason that the spouse calls it a little bed. “I will search,” says she, “all night in my little bed Him whom

my heart loves” (Cant. iii 1.) She has made the bed of her heart so narrow, that there is only place left for her Beloved. And, on the contrary, he who enlarges his heart to that extent, as to admit place for another, at the same time leaves no room for God, and expels Him thence. It is of this division of our heart, which God complains in the Prophet Isaiah, when He says, “you have discovered yourself near Me to receive an adulterer; you have enlarged your bed and have contracted an alliance with others.” (Isa. vi-9).

[Rodriguez on Christian and Religious Perfection, Vol I p. 396].

breakers, and hold us liable for treason? ¹ Supposing a King holds court to hear reports of the workings of his kingdom, and if in course of that hearing, mention be made, by the reporter, of one who is the king's own favorite, and then supposing the king orders his reporter to omit that item and pass on, durst the reporter thence forward mention the favorite's name again ² to the king? When we are here busy with the King directly, what other business can draw us away from Him? All ordinary law is set aside before the Highest Law, Himself."

[Bhag: Vish. Bk. X P. 4301 "kedum" x 2 1].

TOPIC 174.

A sign which differentiates the saint from the ordinary man.

Nañjiyar used to relate—"My master Bhattārya with his friend Pillai Tirunārāyaṇār Arāiyar entered the Holy Place (Ananta-puram=Trivendram), and I followed them. There were others who went past in haste and hurry, whereas these Masters strolled about leisurely, enjoying the sight of the high mansions,

1 Cp "Ye foolish and blind for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?" [Matt: xxiii-17].

"Ye blind for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?" [Ibid: xxiv-19]. "Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites because you take mint, and anise, and cummin, and have left the weightier things of the law, judgment, and mercy and faith. These things you ought to have done, and not leave them undone," [Ibid: xxiii-23.]

"Blind guides, who strain out a gnat to swallow a camel."

2. When one loves, and is loved by God, he is become His favorite

and goes beyond the law of retributive justice. Such regenerate soul can cry

"Oh grave 'where is thy victory, O death, where is thy sting?' Cp Yamm, God of Death, whispering, in fear, into the ears of his emissaries: "Keep clear of the worshippers of Madhusūdana. I am the lord of all men, the Valshnavas excepted." * * * * He who through holy knowledge diligently adores the Lotus-feet of that Hari, who is revered by the gods, is released from all the bonds of sin; and you must avoid him, as you would avoid fire fed with oil"

[Vish Pur, Hi-7 13 ff].

turrets and towers lining the streets, as if 'drinking them in with their eyes.' And I admired them thus, thinking within myself:— 'Look, what a difference between them and the throng, in this respect, though in other respects they are one'!

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. X. P. 4312. "Kedum" x-2-2].

TOPIC 175.

All things thrive under God's Grace.

When Tiruvâlu-nâdu Dâsar presented Bhattârya with some fine areca-nuts, Bhattar seeing them exclaimed,— "How excellent they seem' They must surely be nuts grown by the watering and under the fostering care of the grace of the Lord of Tiruppuliyûr, (as chanted by Sî Nannâzhavar in T. V. M. VIII-9-6 "Tiruv-aruf").

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. X. P. 4322. "Punniyam" x-2-5].

TOPIC 176.

God, the Fountain of Holiness; or the Power of His sanctifying Grace.

Nañjiyar asked Bhattârya—"Godsire' What qualification is needed to be able to recite God's names?

Bhattârya.—Son! Dost thou not know that when a man stumbles on the road, he cries out at once "Mamma"? (To cry 'Mamma' then, tell me, what qualification is needed?). He who goes to bathe in the Holy Gaṅga (River Ganges), indeed needs not cleanse himself beforehand by dipping in a salt-water

1. (a) The opposite of this, that nothing can flourish without God's eye of grace, (in other words when His grace is withdrawn) finds an illustration in—'May no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And immediately the fig tree withered away.' [Matt. xxi-19].

When God's grace is bestowed it will be like—"Do not fear, but speak, and hold not thy peace" (9). "Because I am with thee" (10.)

[Acts. xvi(5)].

(b) Read the reminiscences in the lives of King Nalâ and King Haris- chandra and of Job.

Merchant: "Site! Some say that besides the visible body, there is nothing like what is called 'soul,' there is no moral order, and there is no God.¹ Others say, this body is transient, and admit its feculent nature, and therefore they say we must aim at something permanent beyond the body. What, pray, gives rise to these two different opinions?"

Bhattachārya answered: "The Lord hath told us in the Bhagavad-Gītā —

" * * * * * Hard it is
To pierce the veil divine of various shows
Which hideth Me, yet they who worship Me
Pierce it and pass beyond." [VII 14.]

To pure hearts, therefore, God gives sufficient enlightenment to be able to realize the detestable nature of the body, and thence to endeavour to rid oneself of it, but to sinful hearts, love for body persists, and as a consequence to, in its company, commit further abominations. Thus doth God weigh us in His scales of justice, each according to his merits and demerits (*Karma*).²

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. X. P. 4323, "Puṇḇanyam" x-2 5].

"Idle fop! thy lady-love,
"A beauty dost thou call?
But see that evil house of love
Is let. Why let befall
A fly-wing scratch on outer skin,"
Thou needst, to scare the crew,
begin."

* The meaning is that even a scratch on the cuticle as faint as the thinness of the wing of a fly is enough to expose the hatefulness of the body.

(c) "சூன்மேன் மனமுடை"
[Ibid].

"Turn thou the sack from inside out,

its foul contents then thou wilt see."

(d) "For the corruptible body is a hind upon the soul and the earthly habitation presseth down the mind that museth upon many things."

[Solomon's Wisdom. ix. 15].

I read here the interesting Chapter II of Solomon's Wisdom containing the reasonings of the atheists (or the Chārvākas); and Solomon's defence of the Godly contained in Ch. III.

2. A near correspondence to this topic is found in an argument [Paṇ-

TOPIC 17A.

Authoritative teaching alone carries weight.

All spiritual teaching has value when it proceeds from recognised authority. Hence the importance of every constituted church and of truths traditionally handed down. Lord Kṛishṇa, though an Avatār, yet, inasmuch as he suspected that men may not receive his teachings, because of his kinship with herdsmen, enjoined Arjuna to go to his recognized Elders for spiritual instruction, for whom he had respect and veneration. For the Lord said in the Gītā

val's Thoughts, [p. 5 & 6] — How can such as the following occur to a reasoning man ?

"I know not who has sent me into the world, nor what the world is, nor what I myself am. I am terribly ignorant of everything. I know not what my body is nor my senses, nor my soul nor even that part of me which thinks what I say, which reflects on all and on itself, yet is as ignorant of itself as of all beside. I see those dreadful spaces of the universe which close me in, and I find myself fixed in uncorner of this vast expanse without knowing why I am set in this place rather than elsewhere. nor why this moment of time given me for life is assigned to this point rather than another of the whole eternity which was before me or which shall be after me. I see nothing but infiniteness on every side, which closes me round as an atom, and as a shadow which endures but for an instant and returns no more. I know only that I must shortly die, but what I know the least is this very death which I cannot avoid.

"As I know not whence I came,

so I know not whither I go, only this I know that on departing this world, I shall either fall for ever into nothingness or into the hands of an offended God, without knowing which of these two conditions shall eternally be my lot. Such is my state full of weakness and uncertainty, from all which I conclude that I ought to pass all the days of my life without thought of searching for what must happen to me. Perhaps I might find some ray of light in my doubts but I will not take the trouble, nor stir a foot to seek it and after treating with scorn those who are troubled with this care, I will go without fore-sight and without fear to make trial of the grand event, and allow myself to be led softly on to death, uncertain of the eternity of my future condition."

Who would wish to have for his friend a man who should thus speak; who would choose him rather than another for advice in business; who would turn to him in sorrow and indeed to what use in life could we put him ?

(Read the Book of Ecclesiastes in the Holy Bible).

"By prostrations, by fair questionings and by (reverential) service, to truth-seeing Saints, learn, for they shall teach thee wisdom." [iv 34].

The Lord also exhorted Dharmaputra to learn all Truths from Bhîshma, who lay on his death-bed of arrows, and was about to depart from this world. For He said:—

'The sun of Bhîshma, Kuru-Chief!

Oh, setting, light of wisdom too

Shall wane and leave the world in night.

Abjure I thee, hasten and learn.'

[Mahâ-Bhâ Śânti. Parva 46-23].

Bhattârya was accustomed to cite the words of Parîkṣai-
appar that "unless the custodian of an article is a person of
worth, the article loses its value both in the hands of the giver
and the taker."¹

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. A. P. 4334. "Kedum idar ' x-2-9].

TOPIC 179.

God with us, is success- God away, is failure.

God's presence, is our strength, His absence, our weakness.
Arjuna's successes all through the war of the Mahâ Bhârata
and all his other exploits on earth and in paradise, crowned as
they were with victory, were due to Lord Kṛṣṇa ever remain-

1 Cp. (a) "the Holy Spirit specially resides, animating the body of the church, and speaking by the mouth of the bishops"

[Fr de Sale's *Treatise on Love of God*]

(b) This is called Upadeśa-
śuddhi- the Purity of the Teacher and
the Purity of the Teaching, or the
Torch of knowledge handed down

from one Qualified Teacher to another. Otherwise it has no gravity.
Yogî Pârthasārathi, my Guru, sends me (in his letter dated. 22.11.200) the following to be added:—

"The Torch of Light Revealed-
Inherited,

In all its purity from the Fountain-Head."

ing by his side and aiding him.¹ But as soon as the Lord's glorious spirit flew back to the spiritual region, Arjuna found all his power departing from him. For when Arjuna was conducting all the 16,000 ladies safe from Dvāraka to Indraprastha, he was waylaid by robber hordes, and all the women were captured and carried away. Arjuna lifted up his famous Gāndīva-bow to scare the robbers away and protect the ladies. But the bow refused to obey him nor had he the strength of his arm to use it, as heretofore he had. And he exclaimed in grief,—

"Like gifts bestowed on wrong persons,
The same my bow, the arrows same,
The horses same and car the same,
But all no good when He has left"

[Bhag Vish Bk. X. P 4363 — "Viva mṃ" x.3.3].

TOPIC 180.

Bhakti and Prapatti contrasted.

The best means to salvation is God Himself. Even this is two-fold. One is by *Bhakti* or loving Him with all the energy of one's own will, the other by *Prapatti* or loving him with all the force derived from God Himself when the aspirant has resigned his own will, and placed all his hope and confidence in the sweet will and dispensations of Providence. In the former case, incessant training and turning of the will to devotional meditation on God—demanding much individual effort—and which has to be performed strictly in accordance with prescribed modes, and modes demanding qualification such as birth in holy families, rigid preliminaries, and careful watching

1. Cp "Do not fear, but speak, XVIII].

and hold not thy peace. (9) Because
I am with thee" (10) [Acts.

2. Read Mahā-Bhā. Nandala-Par
va 7th Ch for full account.

against the slightest omissions in observance &c—are required; whereas in the latter case neither individual effort nor conditions of birth &c are requisites where a soul in whole-hearted devotion unreservedly throws itself into the loving and caring hands of God.¹ The former (Bhakti) is attended with danger inasmuch as when lacking any of the conditions imposed upon one, who would thus rise by his own strength of will, he renders himself liable not to be accepted by God, whereas in the latter case (Prapatti), the aspirant so unconditionally surrenders himself to God, and so confidently seeks shelter under His protecting wings, that even God, after giving him such protection, cannot cast him away. In the former case (Bhakti), God does not bind Himself to save, whereas in the latter case (Prapatti), He binds Himself to save. Conditions for the former (Bhakti) are untiring devotion and unceasing worship &c., on the part of the creature—the use of self-will, whereas conditions for the latter (Prapatti) are implicit trust and effacement of self-will and proneness to the complete operation of God's will alone. The former (Bhakti) is a slender stream of love proceeding from puny efforts, a creature is capable of producing in his heart, and this is necessarily subject to many accidents, but the latter (Prapatti) is the mighty flood of Grace pouring down from God the Creator, nothing withstanding the rush of the torrent. Bhakti requires pumping up with exertion, whereas Prapatti brings down His Grace in all natural downpour.

Ālavandār—according to Tirumālai Āṇḍān's exposition interpreted St. Namināzhvār's Hymn "Vidumin" [Tiruvāimozhi I-2nd Dec.], as teaching the Doctrine of God's absolute

¹ Cp. And Peter opening his mouth said: In very deed I perceive that God is not a respecter of persons.

"But in every nation, he that feareth Him, and worketh justice, is acceptable to Him."

[Acts. XI 24-26].

Free Grace or the Doctrine of *Prapatti*. Rāmānuja, their disciple, followed this teaching until he wrote Śrī Bhāṣya or the Commentaries on Bādarāyaṇa's Brahma-Sūtras; after which he put the construction that the Hymn taught *Bhakti*, or sustained exertion of man's will directed to loving devotion on the Lord. Asked the reason for changing his attitude, Rāmānuja said that the Doctrine of Grace was too holy to be exposed to the profane gaze of all mankind without reference to their preparedness to receive the same; that it could be effective only when imparted to those who were in heart sufficiently mature to be inclined to receive, assimilate and act upon the Doctrine; as otherwise it would be a case of 'pearls thrown before the swine'. Hence he saw reasons to carefully screen the doctrine from the eyes of the undeserving. Therefore it was that Rāmānuja saw fit to construe the particular Hymn of our Saint Nammāzhvār (alluded to above) as revelational of *Bhakti*, or as that means of reaching God which lays on the soul incessant self-strife, or assiduous application of its own mental energy to meditation. Rāmānuja's object in interpreting the said Hymnal as not intending the Doctrine of *Prapatti* (or entire surrender of the soul to God, and faith and trust in Him, as against the weakness and inadequacy of self-effort) but as intending the Doctrine of *Bhakti* only, was that without the change of the heart leading it to entirely sacrifice itself for God, *Prapatti* would but land the soul in moral turpitude and spiritual bewilderment. Either one must sedulously strive to advance towards God with all the ethical and religious self-preliminary involved in *Bhakti* or by the holocaust of his heart—than which no greater price can be demanded—and leave full scope for the operation of God's free grace. A misunderstanding of the nature of either of these modes of reaching God must retard

the soul in its rapid prosecution of the end of its high divine destiny.¹ What Rāmānuja had from the profane in this work, he divulged in his work named *Śaranāgati-Gadya*.²

[Bhag. Vish. Bk. X., P. 4410. "Sārve" x 4.]

TOPIC 181.

The Ways of God in Saving souls; and Love-privileges enjoyed by the Blest.

The reciprocity of love between Creator and creature is determined by the following considerations

1 In connection with this topic, we invite the reader to peruse Foot note 1, Pp 503-4, to our Engl Trans of Gita, with Rāmānuja's commentaries, where we held out a promise to treat largely on this subject in a separate work. That may now be considered as fulfilled in this Book. There we wrote "Rāmānuja gives here the ordinary interpretation meaning *Bhakti*, whereas a higher interpretation is *Prapatti*. An attempt will be made to elucidate this subject in my Second Volume; but in the meanwhile the reader is referred to the most valuable Tables appended at the end of this work, where he can generally gather some account as to how *Prapatti* differs from *Bhakti*." [Also read Pp 22nd & 1st Ibid, and P 379th, Ibid].

Bhakti is living to self and attaining God.

Prapatti is dying to self and obtaining God.

2. (a) Read the learned Introduction to this work by Sage Periyar-Acchān-billai written in Malay-

pravaṇi (Sanskrit & Drāvid).

(b) Read also *Prapanna-Paryāta*, the Engl Trans of which has appeared in the columns of the *Brahmavādin*.

Cp² There are others, who desiring Christian perfection, seek it by their own strength, which is after weakness or by their own industry and spiritual exercises, and not from God in distrust of self, and as they go backward rather than forward" [P. 301. Supplement to Spiritual Combat by Lorenzo Scupoli.]

Also Cp: "See nothing of thyself; but offer the ground of thy heart cleared of everything, for then he will sow His own seed therein according to His good pleasure: and so shall it bring forth fruit. Remember always that He will have this soul of thine to be solitary and detached from all things, that He may unite it to Himself. Leave Him alone to choose thee, impede him not by thy free will." [Howard Pract. P 316. by Lorenzo Scupoli.]

The way of God in the exercise of His Grace, is such that He hides from His creature even Himself—the Author of the grace—and suffers the creature complacently to believe that he deserved grace by his own acts of merit.

In the forest, Lakshmana, of his own free accord, addressed Râma thus —

“Thou shalt with thy Videhan spouse
Recline upon the mountain’s brows,
Be mine the toil, be mine to keep
Watch o’er thee, waking or asleep.”

[Râm. ii-31-25].

and yet he recollected that he was not his own master, and petitioned to Râma to grant His permission before he would stir to act on his own behalf, when Râma said —

“Some pleasant spot be chosen where
Pure waters gleam and trees are fair.”

Lakshmana then responded thus . .

“Select *I myself* a pleasant spot;
Be mine the care to rear the cot.”

[Râm : iii-15 5 to 7].

God being so perfect and so loving that He stands not in need of such ceremony as that His creature should first beg salvation of Him, and yet He chooses to wait and let a spontaneous¹ desire (for salvation) first arise in the breast. God Himself is eager to grant salvation unsolicited, as becomes His High Godship; but he yet choses to see the soul spontaneously turn his face to Him, and fly to Him for embracement, just as the bridegroom who though his heart is throbbing with love for his bride, yet eagerly waits till the bride herself do make a first movement and fly to Him. The pleasure is thus enhanced on both sides. This is the meaning of God *waiting* and soul *moving*.

1 Spontaneous, meaning not by soul's effort but by God's.

Secondly.—The God's elect are free with God For Nāṭṭijīyar said that he directly heard Bhattārya (his Guru), expatiating on Ājavandār's Hymn, verse 42.¹ thuswise—

'Senāpati is the Archangel and Premier Chamberlain to God. He is robed in the robes of state, carries the fan (the sign and the privilege of royalty), and holds the baton (symbol of authority) Unbeld, he can enter the private chambers where the Lord and His Consort are in the full *abandon* of their love. The Lord taketh no offence at his entry, for he is the Lord's trusted hoary minister with whom there is neither secrecy nor privacy Nor do the Holy Consorts retire at his approach. They but suspend their free disport and look all attention from the Royal throne, which with the Lord they share. The Lord too is all attention now to his hoary Minister Nor is the Minister unaware of the delicate situation. He tarryes not longer than absolutely needeth for the transaction of state-business with which he has come charged. He is averse to obtrude at a time when the Lord is absorbed in His recreations. Senēṣa then puts before the Lord the business of the Kosmos in as few and select terms as possible. To the Lord, on the other hand, the audience which He gives to His High Chamberlain is more replete with interest and more a source of delight than any amount of company with His Holy Consorts. When Senāpati, in trite periods of words, submits to the Lord "Such and

1. त्वदीयभुक्तोऽजितशेषभोजिना
 त्वयानैसृष्टमभरेणयव्यथा ।
 प्रियेणसेनापतेनान्यत्रेति तत्
 तथानुजानन्तमुदारवीक्षणैः ॥

"That Lord of Hosts, to whose Who feeds on remnants of Thy
 counsel food
 By glance giv'st graceful Thou To whom entrustest Karma
 assent,— Rule "

such a one is to be appointed Brahmā of the spheres, and such and such a Brahmā is to be transferred &c.," the Lord at once and unquestioningly, signs sanction with his eyes, and says: "As Thou, Father, hast proposed, so be it." Verily is this archaic Archangel dearer to the Lord than Himself!"

When Bhattārya's heart expanded under the delights of dwelling on the profound secrets of God's love as embodied in this Hymn, he fell into paroxysms of joy in the company of Kidāmbi-y-ācchān (the body-guard disciple of Rāmānuja) and others who happened to be present when this sermon was being delivered. Ācchān was Bhattārya's co-student, and so, great affection they had for each other. Haiy-āzhvār, the disciple of Ācchān, once asked him what made him love and follow Bhattārya so much more than Bhattārya's own disciples did follow him. To which Ācchān answered:—

"Son, thou art unaware of what took place that day, when Rāmānuja placed a book in Bhattārya's hands, led him before Lord Raṅganātha and there outside the Holy Bar, made him recite a stanza; and looking round, addressed the assembly thus:—'Look on Bhattārya, O my brethren! as ye have looked on myself,'"¹

[Bhag : Vish. Bk x. p; 4469 ff : "Aru]" x-6-1]

TOPIC 122.

Salvation sure through our Universal Mother.

The following was Bhattārya's dying exhortation to his disciples:—

'Look at the beauty of our mysteries! Whenever ye recite the Holy Dvaya Mantra, join with it this Holy Hymn of St. Nammāzhvār:—

¹ I have hardly found a parallel to this Topic in the Divine Treasures of the Western Saints.

"Thou Lord, dear to thy Lotus-born Consort,¹
To me art by that kinship dear,
O Blissful Boar, * indeed Thou Saviour art
Save as Thou didst, with tusks, the Earth.

1. About Lakṣmī and Her Functions in the Economy of the Spiritual Universe, read Topic No. 17. Lakṣmī is our High Priestess—like Christ of the Christians, or such other mediatorial Functionaries appointed by God—who ever appear to us in Heaven and Earth presenting us to, and pleading for us, before Her Spouse the Lord and offering Her all. Sufficient Sacrifice for their sake (Read Śrī's doings in Rāmāyaṇa for example), like the Lamb (as Christians would say) taking away the sin of the world. She is thus the abiding propitiation for our sins, by Her endless acts of self-oblation. Read the interesting discussion on the beauty of our Priestess's Mediational Function embodied in Part II, *Druga-prabandha* of Lokāchārya's *Mumukshupaddh* (one of the 15 Rāhasyas of this Saint). The pleading with the Lord on the one hand and comforting the souls on the other is by this Sage metaphorically expressed thus:—

She is "like the Mother who cannot leave the cradle of the

children on the one side, and cannot leave the bed of Her Lord on the other side."

About the relation of bride and bridegroom between souls and God, the nearest correspondence may be found in the Canticle of Canticles. Our High Priestess Śrī (=Bliss) is His dearest Consort, ever reposing on His bosom. She is: "The Queen Consort and ever accessible merciful Mother and Mediatrix,—Trainer and Conduct-Model of the Universe,—Who is ever united to and is one with God, as the light is ever united to and is one with the sun, as expressed by our Lord Himself in Rāmāyaṇa [vi-121-12].

अनन्यसहैमयासीता

भारकरेणप्रभायथा ॥

[Note † of 1884 Benediction of Yogi Pārthasarathi to Lord Ripoe.] †

1. For parallel ideas, read Cardinal Newman's *Meditations and Devotions on the Holy Virgin Mary*.

2. Cp: (a) Viśv: Par: i-4-27,

ततस्तमुत्पिप्यतस्तद्व्या

महावराहकुटपञ्चल्येधनः ।

रसातल्यदुत्पलपत्रसन्निभ

स्तमुत्पितोनोलवाचतेमहान् ॥

Also read *Harivamṣa*, 1st Division Chapter 48.

Like unto sapphire mount with moons in twain
 Rising and shading blue the sea,
 Which for the Devas' sake didst Thou not churn ?
 How then, once joining Thee, can I Thee part ?

[T. V. M. Kôla-Malar-p-Pâvai" x-10-7].

[The meaning is:—"I have taken refuge with my Mother : for one of my Mothers,—the Earth ³ Thou didst undertake a mighty exploit ; for obtaining my other Mother, Lakshmi ⁴ the very ocean Thou didst churn. If They are dear to Thee, and I am dear to Them, how canst Thou not but be dear to me ? Hence my salvation by mediation is secure against every thing that might conspire against such an end. Once bound to Thee thus, I am so secure that neither Thou canst shake me off, nor I can shake Thee off."]

[Bhag : Vish : Bk : x : "Kôla-malar-p-Pâvai. x-10-7]

TOPIC 183.

Conclusion. Praise of the Universal Mother.

We close this Treatise with what we, by virtue of an extraordinary operation of Divine Grace, have just come by, namely,—“Our Standard Sam-skṛit-Tamiḷ Commentary on Sage Yâmunâchârya's Hymn to the Mother and Goddess of the Universe, in honor of whom the annual Dasara Festival, the Weekly Friday Festival, &c., &c., are celebrated throughout India. Of the text of this Hymn, the initial verse is as follows :—

- (a) कान्तगतेषु सद्योत्तमः
- (b) कणिपातेऽस्य चासनं
- (c) वाहनं देवात्मानिह गन्धर्वैः
- (d) यवनिकाया यजगन्मोहिनी

(e) ब्रह्मेशादिस्तु ब्रजस्तदयित त्वशसदासिगणः

(f) श्रीक् इत्येवचनः प्रतेभगवीति भूतः कथं त्वं वयं ॥

(a) The Soul Supreme, 's Thy Lord Beloved !

(b) The Angel most wise, strong,—Thy Couch
And Chair !

(c) Thee, bears Ved-Essence Bird
Who flies with wings of Light and Love !

(d) Thy veil is Wondrous Matter Gross—
Which all the Universe doth blind !

(e) Gods, set to make and end this world,
With all their peers and queens, serve Thee,
As male and female servants true !

(f) Thy very name is " Bliss ! " O Seat
Of ev'ry attribute benign !
How we are worthy, Thee to praise ?

[Page 5. of Śrī: Pārthasārathi Yogi's English Tr: of Śaṅkara's
Lakṣmī-Nṛsiṃha-Karāvalamba-Stotra.]¹

How to all the Blessed Saints.



1. Finished in Veda-Griham, Mysore, 20-8-1902, (the Holy Gī-yatī+Day) on the blest day of the devout celebration in Mysore, of one whole course of Bhagavad : Vi-

ḥayam (or Divinity)-study at the holy feet of the Venerable Teacher Śrīmad Mādhava-puram Śrīnivāsa-chārya, and in the personal presence of Śrī-Pārthasārathi-Yogi.